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Maltese Association of Radiologists
and Nuclear Medicine Physicians

Fluoroscopy-guided Steroid Injection

What is a fluoroscopy guided injection?

Fluoroscopic guided injection uses low dose x-rays to guide a needle into the site of pain. This procedure utilizes a dye (contrast) that shows up on the x-rays. A local anaesthetic and a steroid mixture will be injected.

How do I need to prepare?

You will have to inform the doctor before the procedure if:

- You have had a reaction to contrast in the past
- You are on blood thinning medication such as warfarin, clopidogrel, aspirin, rivaroxaban
- You have been recently taking antibiotics or you are still taking antibiotics
- You have an ongoing infection
- Any allergies to medications
- You are or might be pregnant

We advise you to bring someone with you if necessary as you may not be allowed to drive after the procedure.



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In the procedure room:

You will have to change in the room. A radiographer may assist you with this. The radiologist will carry out the procedure. A simple x-ray is taken to locate the area the injection needs to be placed in. The radiologist will utilize a marker to indicate the injection site. The radiologist then cleans the area to minimize infection. A sterile cover will be placed over the site of injection. Local anaesthetic will be used to minimize pain during the procedure. The fluoroscopy machine guides the needle position. Local anaesthetic and steroid mixture will be injected. A dressing will be applied at the end of the procedure. This needs to be kept dry and clean for the rest of the day.

After the scan - important aftercare:

Strenuous activity should be avoided for a few days after the procedure. Normal pain relief medication can be taken, as the area may be sore for the first few days.

You may experience worsening of symptoms during the following 24 to 48 hours. This is secondary to the steroid and is denoted as a steroid flare. Normal pain relief medication can be taken to alleviate this. If the pain continues to increase, please seek medical assistance.

Steroid injections may occasionally cause thinning and colour alteration of the skin at the injection site. For diabetic patients, a rise in blood sugar levels may occur after the procedure due to the steroid medication injected.

Compiled by Dr. Veronica Attard