

Joint Injections

You may be offered a joint injection or an injection for another musculo-skeletal condition after an assessment by one of the GPs in the practice.

Most of these injections are not painful but may cause brief discomfort when administered. They contain a steroid and a local anaesthetic to help settle inflammation and pain. For some conditions (such as rotator cuff shoulder syndrome) the expectation is that the injection provides long-term relief of symptoms, whilst for other conditions (such as osteoarthritis) they tend to provide temporary relief of pain (typically 3 months, but sometimes much shorter or longer).

As for the Minor Surgery procedure Dr Van der Linden will explain in detail what your options are, and what the potential risks and benefits of the injection are. If you decide to go ahead with the injection you will be asked to sign a consent form.

After the injection you will be asked to rest in reception for 10 minutes before leaving the practice. You are advised to avoid excessive use of the affected part of your body for 48 hours to maximise the effect of the injection, by which time most patients will notice that the injection has taken effect. You should be able to resume normal activities after 48 hours.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Please let us know if you have an allergy to dressings or local anaesthetic.

Although blood thinning tablets do not generally prevent us from performing any procedures, please remind us if you are taking any.

If you are diabetic you may notice that your blood sugars can temporarily increase after an injection with steroids. If you have any concerns about this please speak to the GP.

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Minor Surgery & Joint Injections

Patient Information Leaflet

Dr Van der Linden performs Minor Surgery and Joint Injections for the practice. Clinics are usually held on a Tuesday. Patients have to be seen by a GP first and, if suitable, they will be asked to make an appointment for Minor Surgery or a Joint Injection. For Minor Surgery we have a fully equipped operating area where we aim to provide a rapid access, local service with minimum inconvenience to our patients. Joint injections are performed in the GP consulting room.

Before your Minor Surgery

Please have a shower or bath before coming to your appointment.

You can have your meals as normal beforehand, although a light meal may be more comfortable for you than a large meal.

You may prefer to arrange for somebody else to bring you to your appointment and take you home afterwards. Although it's unlikely to be a problem we would not advise travelling unaccompanied by public transport in case you feel unwell afterwards.

It helps to wear loose fitting clothing. You will not be required to strip off completely and we usually only need to expose the affected part.

Please arrive at least 10 minutes before the expected time of your surgery and check in at reception as normal in order to assist with the smooth running of the clinic.

We pride ourselves on making the procedure as pain free as possible. You will be awake throughout and no sedation is required. The operation will be conducted under local anaesthetic (an injection with a very fine needle to make the area go numb.) You will feel a mild discomfort for a few seconds as the anaesthetic is administered. Thereafter you will feel no pain at all.

Apart from parents/carers or partners we are not able to accommodate companions in the minor surgery room but they are welcome to sit in the waiting room whilst you are having your operation.

What to expect

Before your surgery Dr Van der Linden will explain exactly what procedure is being done and why. You will have the opportunity to ask any questions about the procedure being performed and/or any alternative treatments - including what would result if you decided not to have surgery. If you decide to go ahead you will be asked to sign an agreement known as a consent form.

We would like to emphasise that any procedure involving cutting the skin will result in a scar. In some circumstances the scar may be larger or more prominent than the lesion being removed.

After you Minor Surgery

If a lesion has been cut out or biopsied (where a small piece of the lesion is removed to help with diagnosis) it will be sent for "Histology". This is routine for all cases and does not necessarily mean that we suspect anything serious. Histology means that the sample will go to the hospital, where an expert will look at it under the microscope and provide a diagnosis. We will check that we receive a report on any sample we send to the hospital and you do not have to contact us. If you have given us permission to contact you by text we will do so as soon as we receive the report, which can be up to 4 weeks after the procedure. If you have not heard from us after 4 weeks or you have not given us permission to contact you by text please contact us 4 weeks after the procedure to enquire about the results and find out if a follow up appointment with the GP is needed.

Looking after your wound

Depending on the wound you may or may not have a dressing after the procedure. If a dressing has been applied this should remain dry and intact for 24 hours. Please keep the wound dry for 48 hours after the procedure unless advised otherwise. After 48 hours you may have a shower or bath and gently pat the wound dry afterwards. Avoid applying soap or talcum powder directly to the wound for two weeks as it may cause irritation or soreness and impair the healing process.

Stitches

Not all procedures involve stitches, and most of them will dissolve without the need for removal. However, if you have non-dissolving stitches you will need to book

an appointment with the practice nurse to have your stitches removed. We recommend that you book this appointment on the day of your operation before you leave. The doctor will advise you whether and when your stitches should be removed before you leave.

You will be provided with written wound care instructions before you go home.

Pain relief

The local anaesthetic will start to wear off 3 hours after your operation. We recommend that you take some painkillers 2 hours after your operation so that they start to work as your anaesthetic wears off. Suitable painkillers are paracetamol, co-codamol or ibuprofen.

Complications

Complications are rare.

If your wound is bleeding then this can usually be stopped by applying pressure over the dressing, with a clean dry cloth or towel, for 10 minutes.

Signs of infection include a fever, increasing redness or pain around the wound and a mucky green or yellow discharge.

Occasionally you may notice an area of numbness adjacent to the wound as a result of damage to one of the small nerves in the skin. This may return to normal after a period of several weeks but in some instances it may be permanent.

If you think you have an infection or have any concerns about your wound following minor surgery then please telephone the surgery to speak to the Doctor or Practice Nurse so that an assessment can be arranged.

You should be able to return to normal activities, including driving, as soon as you feel able.

Most patients will be back at work the next day.