

Therapeutic Joint and Bursal Injections



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What is a Therapeutic Injection?

Joint or bursal injection is a useful diagnostic and therapeutic procedure for patients and physicians. Placing a steroid medication into the joint or bursa reduces inflammation and, therefore; can alleviate pain.

CPT Codes

20610	Shoulder, Hip, Knee	20605 Wrist
77002	Fluoroscopic Guidance	
J3301	Steroid (Usually Kenalog)	

Indications

joint and bursal related pain including some of these common maladies: trochanteric bursitis, pes anserine bursitis, prepatellar bursitis, leg length abnormalities, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, pain and disability from iliotibial band syndrome

Contraindications

pregnancy, acute fracture, joint prosthesis, inaccessible joints, lack of response after three to four injections

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

Patients on coumadin should stop taking their medication 3 days before the procedure. Patients on Plavix/Ticlid/Aggrenox need to stop taking medications 3 days before the exam.

This procedure does not require patients to have a driver.

What Happens During the Test?

The technologist will obtain a patient history. The patient will be asked to lay on his back and the radiologist will sterilize the area around the site to be injected.

The radiologist will numb the area with a local anesthetic. Fluoroscopy will be used to direct a small needle into the joint. A small mixture of anesthetic and cortisone is then slowly injected into the joint. Patients may or may not notice pain relief in the first few hours after an injection.

The injection itself only takes a few minutes, but the overall procedure takes approximately 30 minutes.

After the Procedure

Your patient may return to their normal diet and exercise routine. He may resume his medication regime. He may feel some discomfort after the procedure. Your patient should not perform any heavy lifting or rigorous activity for 24 hours. If no improvement is seen within 10 days following the injection, it is unlikely that the patient will gain any pain relief from the injection and further diagnostic tests may be needed.

The Results

A radiologist will analyze the images and send a signed report to the referring physician within 1 business day.

(Information adapted from American Family Physician and Dr. James Choi)

This manual is intended for use as merely a guideline for referring physicians and their staff only. It contains information pertaining to the most commonly ordered exams and indications. However, Iowa Radiology does not recommend any particular examination. Individual radiologist preference or patient circumstances may dictate ordering alternative studies. Although contrast codes are not needed to place an order, the following contrast codes may be used in placing orders: CT Contrast Q9967, MRI contrast A9577 and A9579.