

## Treatment with an intra-articular joint injection

### Introduction

You will soon come to the Amstelland Hospital for an intra-articular joint injection. This leaflet provides additional information on this treatment. Be aware that your personal situation may differ from the one described in this leaflet.

### What is an intra-articular joint injection?

Joint pain can be caused by issues such as wear and tear, inflammation or strain. You may then experience irritation in your tendons, capsules or ligaments, wear and tear of cartilage (osteoarthritis) or bursitis. This irritation may lead to swelling or pain in the shoulders, wrists, hips, knees or ankles. An injection into the joint can reduce the pain. Consequently, you can often move the joint better. An intra-articular injection will not heal the condition, but it will decrease your suffering.

### Important to note

Always contact (before your next treatment) the Pain Medicine Department if one of the following applies to you and you have not yet discussed this with the pain specialist. The following information may be important for your treatment:

- Use of blood-thinning medication  
The pain specialist will discuss with you whether, and how long in advance, you have to stop taking this medication.

- A (potential) pregnancy  
X-rays will be taken during this treatment, and these are potentially harmful to an unborn child.
- Diabetes
- Allergy or hypersensitivity to iodinated contrast agents, iodine, medication or adhesive plaster.

### The day of the treatment

The treatment will be performed in the treatment rooms, location C 36. From the main entrance, follow the yellow route to the right (31-50). Upon arrival, you will report on time to the reception desk of the Treatment Centre. You can sit down in the waiting room. Because X-rays will be taken, anyone accompanying you may not be present during the treatment. Please count on staying at the hospital for roughly an hour. During your treatment, the person accompanying you can use the restaurant in the hall.

### Different treatments

#### 1. Trial treatment

You may first undergo a trial treatment with only an anesthetic. The purpose of this treatment is to determine if the pain actually diminishes. This anesthetic lasts for several hours. If you do experience pain relief, a therapeutic treatment can also take performed. To schedule this therapeutic treatment, you will be consulted for an appointment at the outpatient clinic.

## *2. Therapeutic treatment*

For a therapeutic treatment, a local anesthetic and adrenal cortex hormone (corticosteroid) will be injected into the joint. The substance is anti-inflammatory, and it reduces joint pain and swelling.

## *3. Treatment with durolane/hyaluronic acid*

This treatment is applied to treat osteoarthritis (wear and tear of the cartilage). Osteoarthritis in a joint can reduce the quality of the joint fluid (synovial fluid).

Joint fluid acts as a kind of shock absorber for bones and joints; it lubricates the joints and nourishes the cartilage. If the quality of the synovial fluid has degraded, the joint can cause pain. Durolane/hyaluronic acid replaces the lubricating and shock absorbing properties of the joint fluid. It reduces the pain in the joint and increases its shock-absorbing capacity.

## **Treatment**

### *Hip or shoulder treatment*

You will lie down on a narrow table on your back. You do not have to undress completely; you will only need to uncover the site of the injection. The skin will be numbed and disinfected with iodine at the site of the block. The pain specialist will place a sterile cloth over the joint to be treated. Aided by radiology (direct observation of objects opaque to light using some form of radiant energy), the pain specialist will then position a needle within the joint. To check the position of the needle, contrast liquid is injected. After this procedure, the pain specialist will inject the solution into the joint. A plaster will be attached to the site of the needle insertion. The treatment lasts for approximately ten minutes.

### *Knee or ankle treatment*

You will sit on the edge of the examination table, with your legs not touching the ground. You do not have to undress completely; you will only need to uncover the site of the injection. The skin will be numbed and disinfected with iodine at the site of the block. The pain specialist will place a sterile cloth over the joint to be treated. With the aid of ultrasound, the pain specialist will insert a needle into the joint and inject the solution. A plaster will be attached to the site of the needle insertion. The treatment lasts for approximately ten minutes.

### *Post treatment*

After the treatment, you will be taken to the Pain Medicine Department. You will remain there for roughly an hour under a nurse's supervision.

## **Results**

Some patients feel the effect of the treatment shortly after the injection, while others may take two to three weeks to feel anything. A maximum effect is only expected after three months.

## **Complications/side effects**

The chances for complications such as infection and bleeding at the injection site and/or any allergic reactions is very small. Sometimes, there is a slight pain, some warmth and stiffness in the joint.

There may be temporary numbness or loss of strength in the treated area. This is due to the anesthesia, and it will wear off after a few hours. The blood sugar values of diabetic patients may temporarily fluctuate.

## **Going home**

After the treatment, you may not drive yourself on the same day. You must ensure that someone else brings you home.

**Home again**

After the treatment, the existing pain symptoms may initially worsen. This is only temporary. You can take painkillers for this (e.g. paracetamol according to the package leaflet).

You can remove the plaster from the site of the needle insertion either in the morning or on the following day. At that point, you can shower and bathe again.

**Attention!**

The contraceptive pill will not be reliable until the next menstrual period!

**Questions?**

Should you still have questions after reading this leaflet, you can contact the Pain Medicine Outpatient Clinic at +31 (0)20 755 7010.

**Notes on this leaflet**

If any information in this leaflet is unclear or incomplete, please notify us. You can share your remarks with us via [voorlichting@zha.nl](mailto:voorlichting@zha.nl).