

IMAGING

CT Guided Facet Joint/ Nerve Root Injections

Preparing you for your admission, making you comfortable and cared for during your stay, and supporting you when you leave



KING EDWARD VII's
HOSPITAL

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This leaflet contains information for a CT guided nerve root or facet joint injection. Please contact us with any further questions prior to your examination.

What is a CT guided facet joint/ nerve root injection?

CT (computered tomography) takes a series of pictures of your body using multiple X-rays. Facet joint nerve root injections are performed to treat pain in or around the joint. The injection is a mixture of local anaesthetic and a corticosteroid which reduces inflammation.

Using a CT scan for the injection guides the radiologist precisely to the area that needs treatment.

What are the benefits of having this procedure?

These injections help reduce pain associated with the compression or aggravation of nerves commonly in your neck, legs or back.

Are there any risks?

A CT scan uses a small amount of radiation, so it is always considered if the benefit of the procedure outweighs the risk.

This is a common and very safe procedure. However, with any procedure there are risks, side effects and a possibility of complications. The radiologist will go through this with you.

If you are or think you could be pregnant, or if you have had allergic

reactions to corticosteroids or local anaesthetic, you must tell your referring doctor and Imaging team.

Asking for your consent

The radiologist will ask you if you are happy for the injection to go ahead. You will also be asked to sign a consent form which states you agree to have the injection and understand what it involves. If you do not wish to have the injection or are undecided, please tell the radiographer/ radiologist. It is your decision and you can change your mind at any time.

How can I prepare for the scan?

In many cases you do not need to do anything to prepare for the scan.

If you are taking any medication, please let us know when booking the appointment.

What do I need to wear?

You will need to change into a hospital gown to ensure a sterile procedure.

What happens during the procedure?

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown. The radiologist will go through a consent form, check any allergies, explain the procedure and answer any questions you have.

You will be asked to lay in a position that is comfortable for you.

A marker is placed on the skin and a planning scan is taken to find the correct position for the injection. The injection site is marked with a pen and the area cleaned.

The radiologist will inject a small amount of local anaesthetic. A needle will be placed into the site and another planning scan is taken. The needle may need repositioning and another scan may need to be taken. Once the tip of the needle is in the correct place, the injection will be given.

How long will the procedure take?

The procedure usually takes about 45 minutes, but it is patient dependant. We will ask you to stay in the department for about 30 minutes after your injection, to ensure you feel comfortable enough to go home.

Will there be anyone with me during the scan?

The radiologist will be in the room most of the time. As CT uses radiation a relative/friend cannot be in the room. However, they can join for the consent and explanation.

Can I bring my children?

We have no childcare facilities and children cannot go inside the hospital for safety reasons.

What happens afterwards?

After the injection, you may feel that your pain is gone or reduced. This is due to the local anaesthetic and it lasts for a few hours.

Once the local anaesthetic has worn off your symptoms may feel worse. In the following 2-3 days you may get a worsening of your symptoms (a steroid flare). You can take pain medication to help. The symptoms usually improve about three days after the injection but this depends on the patient. The benefits of the injection may last for a few weeks or months, but you may need more injections to settle the symptoms. Please speak to your referring doctor if you have any questions.

Contact us

Please contact the Imaging team about any general concerns on 0207 467 4317. However, if you experience any symptoms of concern please contact your GP or go to your local Emergency Department (A&E).

Your comments and concerns

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you. For support or advice please speak to your consultant or the Imaging department on 0207 467 4317.

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch.



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