

Care following your injection

The following information may be helpful in maintaining a quick and comfortable recovery following an injection of a cortisone or anesthetic medication. Consult your healthcare provider with questions.

Discomfort

For 24 to 48 hours after your injection, the injection site may be slightly tender.

If you received an anesthetic and cortisone medication, the anesthetic may “wear off” after two to eight hours, and the cortisone may not start to work for three to four days. The injection site may feel painful again once the anesthetic wears off and before the cortisone starts working. Place a covered ice pack on the area for 15 to 20 minutes when you get home and then again every four to six hours for the first 24 hours.

Take a non-aspirin pain reliever containing acetaminophen (such as Tylenol, Datril or Aspirin Free Anacin) for discomfort. Follow the dosage instructions given by your healthcare provider.

Restrictions

After your injection, do not use a heating pad or any form of heat on the injection site for 48 hours. Unless your health-care provider gives you other instructions, continue to follow your medical self-care and take your usual medications.

Activity

Avoid strenuous use of the injected site for at least seven to 10 days, even if it is no longer painful.

Bathing

You may shower or bathe as usual. Do not take a whirlpool bath or use a hot tub for 48 hours after your injection.

Diet

Continue your normal diet.

When to seek medical care

Contact your health-care provider or seek medical care if you have any of the following symptoms:

- A rash or shortness of breath
- Increased redness, swelling or drainage at the injection site
- A temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or greater
- Chills
- Increased pain that does not stop even after taking pain relief medication
- Change in color, temperature or sensation in the arm or leg of the injection site
- Unusual feelings of weakness or faintness

Important note: If you are unable to contact your health-care provider, have a friend or family member take you to the nearest emergency medical care center or call for medical assistance. Do not drive yourself.

Additional instructions

If you are diabetic, cortisone injections may increase your blood sugar level. Check your blood sugar more often and make the medication changes directed by the health-care provider who helps you to manage your diabetes.

If you become ill or suffer an injury unrelated to the injection, inform your health-care provider that you have recently received cortisone injections.