

## **CORTISONE INJECTION**

Cortisone is an anti-inflammatory medication that can be injected into joints and soft tissues. Cortisone injections can be very effective for decreasing inflammation and reducing pain. The anti-inflammatory effect of the injection should begin to relieve symptoms within one week. Cortisone injections are not always successful and the benefit from the injection will be temporary, lasting anywhere from 2-12 weeks, but occasionally the effects of cortisone can last up to about 6 months. When your symptoms have settled after a cortisone injection, it is very important to strengthen the surrounding muscles before you to return to your usual physical activity.

The injection procedure is covered by Alberta Health Care, but the cost of the medication is not. We can provide this medication to you for a nominal fee. A receipt will be provided to you to send to your medical insurance company so that you can be reimbursed for this cost. Alternatively, we will inject you with cortisone from our stock and you will be provided with a prescription that you can take to your pharmacy to replace the medication; if you choose this method you will not be charged by our office.

### **RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS OF CORTISONE INJECTIONS**

A cortisone injection may be offered to you if the benefits of are thought to outweigh the **MINIMAL** risks. When performed properly these injections should **NOT** be painful., except into certain small joints.

**Post-Injection Flare:** This is an uncommon reaction to a cortisone injection, occurring in less than 10% of people. Effects of a post-injection flare are very similar to an infection (pain, redness, warmth), except it starts in the first 24 hours after the injection. Post-injection flares typically last 2-3 days, but can last up to a week. Icing the area for up to 20 minutes at a time using an ice pack wrapped in a towel can be helpful; do not apply ice directly to your skin. Some patients also choose to take a pain reliever such as Tylenol® (acetaminophen) or an anti-inflammatory such as Aspirin®, Advil® (ibuprofen) or Aleve® (Naproxen) to treat a post-injection flare. If the post-injection flare lasts longer than 7 days, please notify your doctor.

**Infection:** The risk of infection is extremely low; studies suggest the risk is around 1 in 10,000 injections. Signs of infection usually occur around 4 days after the injection but can occur up to 10 days later. These symptoms may include fever and chills, and pain especially with joint motion, warmth and redness at the injection site. If you have any of these symptoms please call our office, or go to the nearest urgent care or emergency clinic and tell them that you recently had a cortisone injection.

**Weakening or Rupture of Tendons:** After an injection of cortisone close to a tendon, these structures can be temporarily weakened and there is a risk of tendon rupture. Heavy lifting or intense sporting activities are not recommended for 10-14 days after an injection. Repeated cortisone injections close to tendons increases the chance of tendon degeneration and rupture.

**Allergic Reaction:** You can have an allergic reaction to the cortisone preparation or local anesthetic. If you have ever had any allergic reactions to cortisone or to local anesthetics, please inform your doctor prior to your injection.

**Other Adverse Effects:** Other potential short- and long-term adverse effects include but are not limited to: bleeding, facial flush, fat atrophy under the skin, pigment changes, nerve or blood vessel injury, increased blood sugar, as well as bone and immune system effects. Repeated cortisone injections into a joint may be harmful to joint cartilage and can cause osteoarthritis to progress. If you have any questions, please ask your doctor. If you have persistent swelling or pain, fever or chills, or if you notice a significant change in your well-being, please contact the clinic at 403-251-9535.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand/accept the risks and benefits of a cortisone injection.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_