

Facet Joint Injection

Injection of the spinal facet joints with anti-inflammatory medication is aimed at relieving back and neck pain. The facet joints are in the back of the spine and add stability that allows controlled movement of the spine. However, like knees and hips, these joints also suffer from arthritic changes that can cause back and neck pain.

Facet joint injections are brief and simple outpatient procedures and are aimed to relieve inflammation of the joints. The procedure is generally done with local anesthesia, but without sedation. Patients are prone (face down) on the procedure table and fluoroscopy (x-ray) is used to accurately see the joint for the injection. A type of corticosteroid (anti-inflammatory like cortisone) is used for the injection, along with a long lasting type of local anesthetic.

You should have nothing to eat for 4 hours before the injection. If you are having intravenous sedation for the procedure, you may only have sips of water during the 4 hours prior to procedure. If you will not have intravenous sedation, you may have clear liquids including black coffee, but no solid food for the 4 hours prior.

Please confirm with us if you have diabetes, take blood thinning medications, and/or have experienced a reaction to iodine-containing medications (used for some x-rays.)

After the procedure, you may have soreness at the site of the injection and experience mild worsening of your usual pain. This injection is not within the spinal canal, so post-injection headache is rare. You should rest the day of the injection, but no specific restrictions are necessary.

If you have fever, chills, substantial worsening of your pain, new numbness or weakness, or other troubling symptoms, please call our office at any time at 707-252-9660.