



Post Procedure Instructions

You have received an injection containing local anesthetics and/or steroid that is still likely to be present in your system when you are discharged. Local anesthetics cause numbness in the area of injection and might affect your muscle strength resulting in mild weakness. It is therefore **required** that you have someone drive you home.

Some injections are for diagnostic purposes only and result in a short period of pain relief (typically 2 – 5 hours). For diagnostic injections, you will be given a **Pain Diary** to take home. Please **fill this out** and do not forget to have it with you during your next follow up appointment.

For the next 12 hours:

- Do not drive a car, operate heavy machinery or handle power tools.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages of any kind, including beer or wine.
- Do not sign important papers or make important decisions if you received intravenous or oral sedation since this can impair your judgment.

Diet:

- Drink plenty of fluids. Advance diet as tolerated. Begin with a light meal and progress to your usual food requirements the next day.

Comfort Measures:

- Resume your usual medications. **DO NOT** forget to restart your blood thinners (aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin, etc.)
- You may apply ice to the injection site for fifteen minutes at a time every 1-2 hours.
- **DO NOT apply a heating pad to the area for the first 24 hours.**
- You may shower, but avoid baths, hot tubs, or swimming for 24 hours.

Activities:

- You may perform moderate exercise (leisurely walking or stretching) on the day of the injection. Resume other activities after 3 days.
- Avoid heavy lifting (greater than 10 lbs.) for 3 days.
- Avoid twisting and forward bending (no workouts, heavy household duties, golf, etc.) for 3 days.

After a diagnostic injection (facet injection or nerve root block):

- The goal of a diagnostic injection is for you to assess whether blocking the pain signals from a facet joint or specific nerve is responsible for the discomfort you have been experiencing. You should, therefore, continue to be active for the next 3-5 hours after the injection. Try to do things that would normally be painful and see whether the injection makes a difference.

Remember: This is just a diagnostic injection, and if the pain you are experiencing is not from that area, you will not experience any relief. Please do not forget to fill out the Pain Diary and to bring it along with you to your next appointment.

Post Procedure Instructions (continued)

Expected effects:

- If you received a steroid injection you may experience facial flushing from the steroid (dexamethasone), restless sleep or a restless feeling. You may feel as if you have a low grade temperature and your blood pressure might be up slightly. These symptoms usually last for 1-4 days and are to be expected. If you have diabetes mellitus, your blood sugar may temporarily increase to twice it's usual value. Again, this will last only 1-4 days.
- You may experience an increase in pain the day following the procedure. The steroid medication may take 1-3 days before it becomes effective. Do not become discouraged if you had only temporary pain relief. At times a diagnostic injection will not give you any relief at all.

Complication to watch for:

- Numbness, weakness, or tingling in the arms or legs lasting more than 24 hours.
- Fever (measured oral temperature of greater than 101 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Nausea, or a new or unusual headache, or stiffness in the neck.
- Difficulty urinating or difficulty holding your urine.
- Bowel incontinence.
- Bleeding more than ½ teaspoon from the injection site.
- Unusual swelling or drainage from the injection site.
- Contact your personal physician if your blood sugars do not return to their usual levels after 4 days. Your diabetic medications may need to be adjusted.

If any of the above occur, please call our office at **(518)782-3938**.

If you have difficulty breathing or chest pain when taking deep breaths, **call 911**, since this could be a reaction to the medication or something else that needs immediate attention.

Follow-up Appointment:

Schedule your next follow-up appointment when you check out.

I have read the above instructions and have been given the opportunity to have my questions answered and/or explained to me.