



Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Patient Information

# Sacroiliac Injection

Welcome to the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital (ROH).  
For further information please visit [www.roh.nhs.uk](http://www.roh.nhs.uk)

## What is a sacroiliac joint injection?

Sacroiliac joints are joints that join the lowest part of the spine, the sacrum to the pelvis. There is one on each side. They help to support weight and act as a suspension when walking. The joints can become inflamed causing pain. A steroid injection into the sacroiliac joints can help to relieve the pain by reducing the inflammation.

## What does it involve?

You will be lying on your front for the procedure, which usually takes 10-20 minutes. Local anaesthetic is injected into the skin and a fine needle is passed toward the joint under X-ray guidance.

Once the needle is confirmed to be in the joint, the injection takes place.

## What is injected?

- A small quantity of dye (which can be seen on the x-ray images) is used to confirm that the injection is into the joint.
- Local Anaesthetic – injected into the joint.
- Steroid – injected into the joint

## Does it work?

The injection is used primarily to diagnose the source of your pain. The local anaesthetic numbs the joint so if the sacroiliac joint is the source of pain, you should experience significant pain relief within 15 minutes of the injection, which may last for a few hours. Again, if the sacroiliac joint is a source of pain then there may be some prolonged pain relief from the steroid which may last over 6 months in about a quarter of patients. More often the pain returns within days, weeks or a few

months after the procedure in which case it may be repeated or you may undergo a potentially longer lasting treatments such as prolotherapy or radiofrequency denervation rhizolysis).

## Risks and side effects

### Due to the procedure:

- Infection – rare.
- More discomfort for the first few days after your injection.
- Bruising to the injection area.
- Leg numbness and weakness are very rare side effects.
- Temporary difficulty taking weight through the injected side.
- Allergy to injected medication

### Due to the injected steroid:

- Facial flushing for a few days.
- Temporary alteration of your usual menstrual cycle (females).
- Temporary increase in your sugar levels (diabetics)

## What happens on the day of my appointment?

- You can eat and drink.
- Take all your tablets as normal. Bring a list of your tablets with you.
- Please arrive at the Admissions and Day Case Unit (ADCU) no more than 10 minutes before your appointment time as waiting area is limited.
- A nurse will take some details from you to check that you are fit for your procedure.
- You will be at the ADCU for about 2- 4

hours. This time may vary depending on unforeseen circumstances.

- A doctor, not necessarily your consultant will come and see you. You will be asked to sign a consent form. The doctor will be able to answer any questions you may have at this time.
- Please bring a dressing gown and sensible footwear with you. You will be asked to walk to the treatment room on ADCU.
- After you have had your procedure, you will need to stay with us for about 30 minutes before you can go home.

**You must NOT drive home or go home on public transport. Please arrange for someone to collect you from ADCU. You are allowed to go home by taxi.**

#### After your Injection

- Take things easy for the rest of the day. Do not do any excessive exercise or heavy work for the first few days.
- Remove the dressing the next morning.
- Continue to take your pain tablets till you notice any.

#### Important information

- Please inform ADCU if you are diabetic, have a cough or cold or have any kind of infection.
- You must inform us if you are taking any of the following tablets – antibiotics, aspirin, warfarin or clopidogrel before attending as some of these may need to be stopped some days before.
- Your procedure may be cancelled if you do not inform ADCU of the above before your appointment date.
- If you cannot make your appointment date, you must let the ADCU scheduled care coordinator know as soon as possible on 0121 685 4334, Mon-Fri 8.30pm-4.00pm
- This will mean that the appointment can then be given to someone else.

#### Advice for relatives and visitors

If you are brought in by a relative or friend, they can accompany you to the admission reception, where you will be booked in and handed in to the care of the ADCU team. Please ensure your relative or friend is aware that there is waiting space for **patients only** in ADCU.

Relatives/friends wishing to stay on site are kindly asked to leave the Admissions Unit and are welcome to use the restaurant facilities in the main hospital building. Long stay parking is available at Gate A and C.

We ask for only **one nominated relative/friend** to contact us for updates (e.g. progress, expected discharge time). Relatives are free to contact **ADCU** for updates on **0121 685 4080**.

We have in excess of 40 patients attending this unit per day and would welcome your co-operation. Thank you.

#### Information for females

We will need to know the start date of your last menstrual period due to the use of X-ray equipment. If you think you might be pregnant, contact ADCU for advice.

ADCU - 0121 685 4080

Please make calls Mon– Fri 9am – 3pm

#### Smoking

All NHS Trusts have a No Smoking Policy. Smoking must be restricted to designated smoking shelters only. Smoking shelters are located by:

- Outpatients main entrance,
- Front of the site by the entrance doors, accessed from Gate A.
- Rear of the site by the High Dependency Unit (HDU) Please help keep the site clean and tidy by disposing of cigarette ends in the bins provided.

#### Patient Support

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers help, support and advice to patients, their relative, friends and carers. PALS can help answer questions you have about

hospital services; respond to problems or concerns; and welcome your suggestions or comments, both positive and negative.

PALS can be contacted by phone, Monday to Friday, 8.30am and 4.30pm. See contact details below.

### **Patient Experience**

As a hospital we are committed to listening to the views of our patients and using the feedback to inform service improvement plans. You may be asked to complete a number of surveys at different stages during your treatment. Please help us by completing the questionnaires. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

### **Contact Numbers**

PALS	0121 685 4128
ADCU Scheduled care coordinator	
	0121 685 4334
ADCU	0121 685 4080

### **Further Information**

[www.roh.nhs.co.uk](http://www.roh.nhs.co.uk)

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

[www.spinalmedical.co.uk](http://www.spinalmedical.co.uk)