

Cortisone Injections

Cortisone shots are injections that may help relieve pain and inflammation in a specific area of your body. They're most commonly injected into joints — such as your ankle, elbow, hip, knee, shoulder, spine and wrist. Even the small joints in your hands and feet might benefit from cortisone shots.

The injections usually comprise a corticosteroid medication and a local anesthetic. Often, you can receive a cortisone shot at your doctor's office. Because of potential side effects, the number of shots you can receive in one year generally is limited.

During the Appointment:

- Your doctor might ask you to change into a gown. You will then be positioned so that your doctor can easily insert the needle into the affected area.
- Your doctor will clean the area around the injection site. He/She might also apply an anesthetic to numb the area where the needle will be inserted.
- In some cases, your doctor will be using ultrasound to watch the needle's progress inside of your body – to insure it is placed in the correct spot.
- You will likely feel some sort of pressure when the needle is inserted. Please inform your doctor if you feel a lot of discomfort.
- The medication is then released into the injection site; typically cortisone shots include a corticosteroid medication to relieve pain and inflammation over time and an anesthetic to provide immediate pain relief.

After the Appointment:

- Some people have redness and a feeling of warmth of the chest and face after a cortisone shot.
- Side effects include but are not limited to: skin changes, tendon injury, neurovascular injury, increased pain, infection.
- If you have diabetes, a cortisone shot might temporarily increase your blood sugar levels.
- Insure you protect the injection area for a day or two. EG: If you received a cortisone shot in your shoulder, avoid heavy lifting for a couple of days.
- Apply ice to the injection site as needed to relieve pain. Don't use heating pads.
- Watch for signs of infection, including increasing pain, redness and swelling that lasts more than 48 hours.
- Don't use a bathtub or hot tub for two days, however you may shower.