



SHORE ORTHOPAEDIC UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATES

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NOTE TO OUR PATIENTS ABOUT POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS FROM A CORTISONE INJECTION

Dear Patient,

Your doctor has provided you with a cortisone injection today and we wanted to make you aware of some potential side effects that can occur within the first few days after a cortisone injection.

Please note that by no means do these side effects occur to all patients and many patients will experience immediate benefit and improvement from the injection with no ill effects.

There are however several things that patients may notice as a side effect after their cortisone injection for the first several days.

The first of these is that patients can experience increased pain in the area that was injected after a cortisone shot. This can last for 2-3 days and at times the pain can be intense and burning. The patients often feel that the pain worsens before it finally gets better.

For this we recommend that you use ice and take any appropriate anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen or Aleve as long as you have no allergies to aspirin and are not on Coumadin as a blood thinner. If ice is not effective, heating pad may be tried instead. Again this increase in pain typically will go away with 48-72 hours after the injection.

A second common side effect of a cortisone injection is a hot flash. This may be accompanied by your face and neck appearing red and perhaps people even commenting that you appear red and flushed in the face and neck. This can at times even be accompanied by a sense of palpitation and fluttering in the chest.

Again this effect typically will go away within 48-72 hours. If you have ever experienced a flushing reaction from Niacin, you will be familiar with the feeling associated with this cortisone "hot flash".

Any diabetic patient will note that their blood sugar is higher for a period of 5-7 days after the cortisone injection. We suggest you contact your medical doctor or diabetic specialist if the blood sugar rises excessively to ask their advice about perhaps increasing your medication temporarily. Again the effect of raising your blood sugar will typically go away by 5-7 days after the injection.

Similarly a transient increase in blood pressure can also occur after a cortisone injection although again this typically goes away within 5-7 days after the injection.

Lastly patients always ask us how long it will take for cortisone to be effective and typically cortisone shots will work to decrease your pain within a few days but in certain joints, it can take up to 1-2 weeks for the full benefits of a cortisone injection to be achieved so be patient when monitoring your pain for benefit from the injection.

If this sheet does not answer any questions you have regarding your cortisone injection, please feel free to contact our office.

Respectfully, The Doctors of Shore Orthopaedic University Associates