

What should I do after the injection?

1. Rest the affected joint for the first 24–48 hours.
2. If there is pain during this period, ice the area and/or take painkillers.
3. Any bandage that was placed over the injection site can be removed after 24 hours.
4. Light exercise is allowed after the first 48 hours. However, you should avoid intensive activities for the first two weeks.

The numbness from the anaesthetic usually wears off after 3–4 hours and pain may return until the anti-inflammatory effects of the cortisone sets in, 4 days later. The effect of the cortisone is slowly progressive, peaking only after a few weeks.

If you have any queries, please contact your doctor at **6850 3333** (during office hours).

The Changi Sports Medicine Centre (CSMC) is the largest multi-disciplinary Sports Medicine centre in Singapore. Our Sports Physicians, Sports Orthopaedic Surgeons, Sports Physiotherapists, Exercise Physiologist, Sports Trainers, Dietitians, and Podiatrists cater to both recreational and competitive athletes. CSMC's services include the treatment of sports injuries, injury prevention, pre-participation screening, performance enhancement, exercise testing, exercise prescription, weight management, and sports event medical coverage.

The Singapore Sports Medicine Centre (SSMC) is an alliance between the Changi General Hospital and the Singapore Medical Group. Conveniently located at Novena Medical Centre, SSMC is a one-stop private clinic for the management and treatment of sports injuries. Providing the same services as CSMC, SSMC is led by its Medical Director, Dr Ben Tan, who is also Head and Senior Consultant Sports Physician at CSMC.

For appointments and enquiries,
please call the CGH Appointment Centre at
Tel: (65) 6850 3333

CGH Appointment Centre operating hours:

8.30 am to 8.00 pm (Monday to Friday)
8.30 am to 12.30 pm (Saturday & Sunday)
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For more information, please visit
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Cortisone Injections



Singapore Sports Medicine Centre



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What is cortisone?

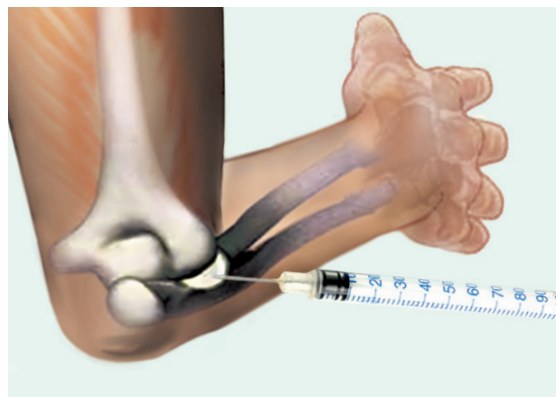
Cortisone is a type of steroid released from the adrenal gland when your body is under stress. Injectable cortisone is synthetically produced but is a close derivative of your body's own product.

Why do I need a cortisone injection?

Corticosteroids are anti-inflammatories and should not be confused with anabolic steroids. In sports medicine, corticosteroid injections are often used to treat selected conditions affecting the joints, tendons, ligaments and muscle insertions. An injection can deliver medication directly to the diseased area to relieve pain, inflammation and swelling, with minimal side-effects to the rest of the body.

How is the injection performed?

After identifying the specific site and cleaning the area, a needle is carefully inserted. To achieve greater accuracy, your doctor may use an ultrasound scanner to guide him. A mixture of cortisone and local anaesthetic is usually delivered in the same syringe. This procedure takes less than 5 minutes and is done at the clinic.



Cortisone injection to elbow

What are the risks?

When indicated, a local cortisone injection is a safe and effective procedure. Potential side-effects include:

1. Crystal synovitis (steroid flare)

This is a common side-effect—the injected cortisone can crystallise, causing pain. The reaction may occur within the first 2 days of injection. If affected, please ice the area for 15 minutes 3–4 times daily. You may also take oral painkillers for pain relief.

2. Allergic reaction

There may be redness or blisters around the injection site. Movement may be painful.

3. Skin discolouration

A lightening of the skin over the injection site may occur and this can last for a few months after the injection. This is non-threatening and should resolve in another few months.

4. Fat atrophy

If the injection site is superficial, you may notice a slight 'depression' or 'dimpling' of the skin which can persist for several months. This is due to atrophy of the fat at the injection site. For injections under the heel, such as for plantar fasciitis, atrophy of the heel pad can cause discomfort when walking or standing barefooted.

5. Transient increase in blood glucose

If you are a diabetic, you should monitor your blood glucose level for 24 hours after the injection, and adjust your medication accordingly.

6. Weakening/rupture of tendons and ligaments

For this reason, we avoid cortisone injections into certain tendons and ligaments, especially in active individuals. To minimise this risk, we inject the cortisone around the tendon, such as within the sheath surrounding the tendon. Ultrasound helps us to do this accurately.

7. Infection

If there is an increase in pain and redness 2–4 days after the injection, there may be an infection. You may have a fever, feel that movement is painful and the joint may feel warm. Please see your family doctor immediately, or go to our Accident and Emergency Department, if you suspect that you have developed an infection related to the injection.

In conclusion, a cortisone injection is recommended only if the benefits outweigh the risks. Your doctor will discuss the side-effects with you and will only proceed with the procedure with your consent.