



Facet Joint Injections / Z-Joint Injections

What is it?	An injection that is performed to confirm that a facet joint is the source of pain and provide pain relief.
Z-Joints:	Facet joints or zygapophysial joints are located on the back of the spine on each side where one vertebra slightly overlaps the adjacent vertebra. These joints glide and allow movement of the spine.
How is it done?	An I.V. will be started in your hand or arm. A needle is then inserted using fluoroscopy (x-ray) into the joint or joint capsule. An anesthetic agent and steroid are injected.
Expected results:	This is usually a diagnostic and therapeutic procedure. A prolonged decrease in or relief of spinal pain can occur. A detailed pain diary needs to be kept for the first 48 hours following the injection.
How long does it take?	The injection procedure takes about thirty minutes, plus approximately thirty minutes recovery time. Please take your usual medications with a small sip of water unless otherwise instructed.
Risks involved:	Risks include increased pain, headache, bleeding, infection, a reaction to any medications used, nerve damage, paraplegia/quadriplegia, or death.
Side effects:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mild back or neck ache lasting a few days2. Bruising of the skin and tenderness at the injection site3. Short-term headache, salt retention with temporary weight gain4. Rare emotional changes: elation, hyperactivity, anger, depression

- YOU WILL NEED SOMEONE TO DRIVE YOU TO AND FROM THE SURGICAL CENTER
- NO FOOD OR DRINK FOR 6-HOURS PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED TIME OF YOUR INJECTION
- HOLD ASPIRIN FOR 7 DAYS AND HOLD NSAID'S (Naproxen, Ibuprofen) FOR 3 DAYS PRIOR TO INJECTION.



- FOR BLOOD THINNERS (Coumadin, Heparin, Plavix) SPEAK TO YOUR DOCTOR FOR SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS.

Patient Instructions:

- No driving for the rest of the day.
- Apply ice to the area every 15 minutes as needed.
- Continue exercises and stretches as before and as tolerated by pain.
- Drink extra fluids for the next 24 hours.
- Take pain medication if needed as prescribed.
- Monitor your level of pain or pain relief from the time the injection is completed.
- Guard the affected area if numbness is present.
- Follow up as directed
- **IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS CALL 303-788-9322 OR 303-423-8334**