



## INJECTIONS

### **JOINT INJECTIONS**

(Hip/Knee/Shoulder/Elbow/Wrist/Ankle)

A joint injection is an outpatient procedure that administers medication directly into an affected joint. The injections may be used for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes. Diagnostic injections are administered in an effort to identify the area responsible for a patient's pain. Therapeutic injections may administer anti-inflammatory steroids or a lubricating agent like hyaluronic acid to provide long-term pain relief for the patient.

Most patients are awake and only under the effects of local anesthetic during routine joint injections. Depending on the nature and site of the injection, a joint injection may be performed either in an office or in a hospital. Because they have been used for diagnostic and palliative purposes for many decades with minimal side effects, joint injections are considered to be relatively safe procedures.

### **FACET JOINT INJECTIONS**

Facet joint injections are typically performed on an outpatient basis in order to diagnose and treat problems with a facet joint. During the procedure, anesthesiologists carefully guide a needle into the facet joint using live x-ray technology. Patients experience little or no discomfort, as local anesthetics are used to reduce pain at the injection site.

If the procedure is being used for diagnostic purposes, the facet joint will be numbed with lidocaine. If the lidocaine alleviates the patient's pain, a diagnosis may be confirmed. An injection of slow-release steroids may be administered during the same procedure to treat inflammation of the joint and provide long-term pain relief for the patient. Additional steroid injections may prove beneficial every few months to maintain patient comfort.

### **SACROILIAC JOINT INJECTIONS**

The sacroiliac joints, or SI joints, are located at the base of the spine.

A sacroiliac joint injection is an outpatient procedure that takes just a few minutes to complete. During an SI joint injection, the patient lies on their abdomen, sometimes under mild sedation. After numbing the skin with a local anesthetic, a fine needle is inserted into the joint. A slow-release steroid medication is administered, which is designed to begin providing pain relief within three to five days.

Most patients experience a minimal recovery period and can return to work or other usual activities within 24 hours. Pain relief sustained from the injection can last several months, although every patient experiences different results.