

SACROILIAC JOINT (SI) INJECTION

Where is the sacroiliac joint?

The sacroiliac joint is a firm, large C-shaped joint that connects the pelvic bones to the lowest part of the spine (sacrum). They help absorb all of the damaging shock forces of the upper body before balancing and transmitting their weight to the hips and legs. They move constantly when the body is in motion. Additionally, they coordinate muscle firing patterns between the pelvis, low back and hips while walking, running and bending. Basic structural support is also provided while standing in place and sitting. Frequently, SI joint dysfunction co-exists with lumbar disc herniations and lumbar facet syndrome. This occurs because the low back and pelvis rely on many common structures to ensure normal stability and function. When these joints become inflamed or irritated, they may cause pain in the lower back, hips, groin or legs.

What is a sacroiliac (SI) joint injection?

Used as a diagnostic and therapeutic tool, this injection targets lower back and buttock pain. An anti-inflammatory steroid medication and local anesthetic is injected into the inflamed joint. The local anesthetic numbs the joint and also numbs and relaxes the muscles around the joint. To ensure proper placement of the medication the procedure is performed under x-ray – also known as fluoroscopy.

What is the purpose of the sacroiliac (SI) joint injection?

To treat lower back and buttock pain that may be due to this inflamed and painful joint. However, it will not correct the medical problem causing the inflammation but may improve the level of pain you are experiencing. It is not unusual to need more than one injection to obtain long-term benefit. These injections are usually done in a series of three, a month apart if needed.

What are the risks of the procedure?

Some risks, although remote include: bleeding, infection, nerve injury, and allergic reaction to the medication(s). Diabetics may have short-term elevation of blood sugars.

People prone to fluid retention may have increased fluid retention for 1 – 2 weeks.

What to expect during the procedure:

During the injection, your low back / buttock pain will be increased temporarily. Following the procedure, you may experience some additional discomfort for about 2 - 3 days. You may get 4 – 6 hours of pain relief immediately after the injection, however your pain will return and you may have more pain than usual afterwards.

How is the sacroiliac (SI) joint injection done?

Upon registering at the Southwest Ohio Pain Center, we will begin your procedure. An IV will be started and you may be given medication for relaxation if you so desire. Your low back / buttock region will be cleansed with an anti-septic solution and numbed with an anesthetic. This is felt as a stinging / burning sensation. The doctor will insert the needle into the sacroiliac joint. This is felt as pressure, however you may also experience some increased discomfort. The procedure takes about 15 – 30 minutes. A band-aid will be applied at the needle insertion site, which may be removed the next morning. You will be discharged when the physician authorizes and you are stable.

How much relief will I get & how long will it last?

Relief varies from one person to the next. The only way to know is to have the injection

performed. The steroid may take several days to work and peaks in about 2 weeks. It may be several weeks before you feel a change in your pain. You may apply ice to the affected area for 20 minutes every 2 hours to decrease local tenderness. After the first day, you can perform activities as before & return to work.

Will I have any restrictions on the day of the procedure?

You may NOT drive for the remainder of the day after your procedure. No heat is to be used on the injection area for the remainder of the day. No tub bath or soaking in water (pools/Jacuzzi, etc) for the remainder of the day.

For what reasons should I call Southwest Ohio Pain Center after the injection?

If you experience severe back pain, new numbness or weakness of your legs, loss of control of your bladder or bowels, or have signs of infection (temperature greater than 99.9°, drainage, redness / heat at insertion site) – call IMMEDIATELY.

ON THE DAY OF YOUR PROCEDURE, PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING:

- ◆ Take all blood pressure pills & heart medications prior to the procedure with a sip of water at least 3 hours before your requested arrival time. Your vitals must be stable to have the procedure.
- ◆ Have a responsible person to take you home.
- ◆ Arrive at the requested procedure time. Please do not be late or your procedure may be cancelled.

ON THE DAY OF YOUR PROCEDURE:

- ◆ **Do not** take ANY of the following 5 days before your procedure: Coumadin
- ◆ **Do not** take ANY of the following 7 days before your procedure: Plavix
- ◆ Coumadin must be stopped prior to the injection. You must have a normal INR prior to the injection. **Do not stop the drug by yourself.**
- ◆ Eat or drink 6 hours before the procedure.

NOTE: YOUR PROCEDURE WILL BE CANCELLED IF:

**You have an active infection, flu, cold, fever, or very high blood pressure.
You do not have a responsible driver to take you home, arrive late for your
procedure,
or unable to follow the medication / fluid restrictions.**

Call the office at (501) 219-1114 for procedure related questions.

