

## SACROILIAC JOINT INJECTION

### **What is the sacroiliac joint?**

#### **& why are sacroiliac joint injections helpful?**

The sacroiliac facet joints are in the region of the low back and buttocks where the pelvis actually joins with the spine. If the joints become painful they may cause pain in the low back, buttocks, abdomen, groin or legs.

A sacroiliac joint injection serves several purposes. First, by placing numbing medicine into the joint, the amount of immediate pain relief experienced will help confirm or deny the joint as a source of pain. Additionally, the temporary relief of the numbing medicine may better allow a physical therapist to treat that joint. Also, time release cortisone steroid) will help to reduce any inflammation that may exist within the joint(s).

### **What happens during the procedure?**

The patients are placed on the x-ray table on their stomach in such a way that the physician can best visualize these joints in the back using x-ray guidance. The skin on the low back is cleansed using a sterile solution called Betadine. The physician injects an area of skin with numbing medicine. This stings for several seconds. After the numbing medicine has been given time to be effective, the physician directs a very small needle, using x-ray guidance into the joint. A small amount of contrast (dye) is injected to insure proper needle position inside the joint space. Then, a small mixture of numbing medicine (anesthetic) and anti-inflammatory (cortisone/steroid) is injected. One or both joints may be injected depending on location of the patient's usual pain.

### **What happens after the procedure?**

Immediately after the procedure, the patient is transferred to the recovery area for approximately 20 minutes and may be asked to perform an activity that usually brings about pain. Patients are asked to report the percentage of pain relief and report the relief experienced during the next week by calling the clinic. The leg(s) may feel weak or numb for a few hours. This is fairly uncommon, but does occasionally happen.

### **General Pre/Post Instructions**

Patients may eat a light meal before the procedure. If a patient is an insulin dependent diabetic, they should take their insulin and eat. Patients may take their routine medications. (e.g. high blood pressure and oral diabetic medications). If you are on **Coumadin (Warfarin)**, **Plavix (Clopidogrel)**, **Lovenox**, **Pletal (Cilostazol)**, **Effient (Prasugrel)**, **Teclid ( Ticlopidine)**, or **Pradaxa (Dabigatran)**, notify the office so that special instructions may be given. If you are allergic to iodine, contrast, or medical dye, please inform the office. Patients can expect to be at the facility approximately 1 1/2 hours. A driver must accompany the patient and be responsible for getting them home. No driving is allowed the day of the procedure. Patients may return to their normal activities the day after the procedure, including returning to work unless instructed otherwise by the physician.

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