

SACROILIAC JOINT (SI) INJECTION

For Low Back & Buttock

A sacroiliac joint injection is an outpatient procedure for treating low back & buttock pain. This information sheet will explain what it is; your doctor can explain if it is for you.

What are sacroiliac joints?

Sacroiliac joints connect your spine to your hip bone. They connect the bottom of your spine, called the sacrum, to the outer part of the hip bone called the ilium. You have sacroiliac joints, one on each side of the sacrum. The sacroiliac joints help control your hip area when you move, and each joint has several ligaments to help strengthen it.

What is sacroiliac joint pain?

You may feel pain if the sacroiliac joint is injured. At times it may feel like simple muscle tension, but at other times it can be severe pain. You usually feel sacroiliac joint pain from your low back to your buttocks. If the joint is very inflamed, the pain may extend down the back of the leg.

How do I know if I have sacroiliac joint pain?

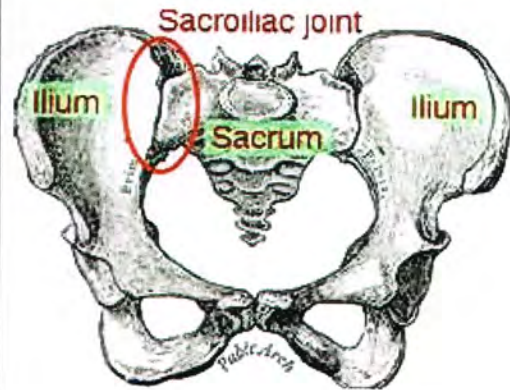
If you have pain in your low back and buttocks that may extend down your leg, then you may have sacroiliac joint pain.

What is a sacroiliac joint injection?

In a sacroiliac joint injection, a local anesthetic and corticosteroid are injected into one or both of your sacroiliac joints. The injection may be used for diagnosis and treatment. If the injection immediately lessens your pain and helps you move better, it tells the doctor which joint is causing pain.

What happens during an injection?

A local anesthetic will be used to numb your skin. The doctor will then insert a thin needle directly into the sacroiliac joint space. X-ray will be used to ensure the safe and proper position of the needle. X-ray dye also may be injected to make sure the needle is in the correct spot. Once the doctor is sure the needle is correctly placed, the medicine will be injected.



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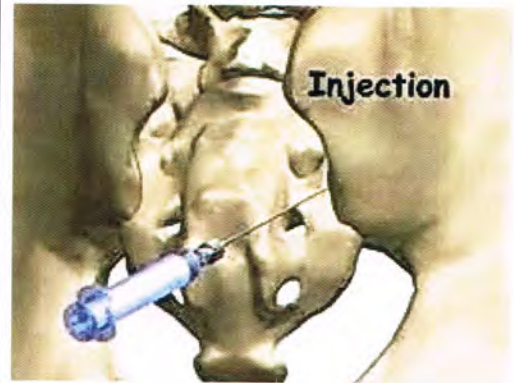
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What happens after an injection?

You will be monitored for up to 60 minutes after the injection. When you are ready to leave, the staff will give you discharge instructions. It may help to move in ways that hurt before the injection, to see if the pain is still there, but do not overdo it. Take it easy for the rest of the day. You may feel immediate pain relief and numbness in your back for a period of time after the injection, this may indicate the medicine has reached the correct spot. Your pain may return after this short pain-free period, or may be a little worse for a day or two. Corticosteroids usually take two or three days to start working, but can take as long as a week. You can usually return to work the day after the injection, but always check with your doctor.

How long can I expect pain relief?

The extent and duration of pain relief may depend on the amount of inflammation. Sometimes other coexisting factors may be responsible for the pain. An injection may bring several weeks to months of pain relief, and then further treatment may be needed. Other times a single injection brings long term pain relief.



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