



About joint injections

A GUIDE FOR TEENAGERS

What is a joint injection?

A joint injection is a treatment that is used for JIA. It means that your doctor will insert a needle into a joint to remove some fluid, and then inject medicine. Most kids notice that the joint is a lot less sore and swollen within a few days after the injection. Injections can make joints feel better for weeks, months or even longer.

Why do I need a joint injection?

Joint injections reduce inflammation and pain in swollen joints. If you only have a few joints swollen they may be the only therapy you need. If you are on medicines already and still have swollen joints, joint injections may save having to increase their doses or change them.

What will happen when I get a joint injection?

Before the joint injection:

- Don't eat or drink for at least two hours before an injection, including chewing gum and lollies. This is because the medicine used to help make you sleepy might make you sick if you have eaten something.
- Wear loose clothes that can be pulled up to uncover the joint(s) that need to be injected.
- A nurse will ask you some questions about your health, listen to your heart and lungs, take your temperature and blood pressure and apply some local anaesthetic cream (numbing cream) to the joints your doctor will inject.
- Your rheumatology nurse will talk to you about what will happen and help you with any worries you have. He/she might show you the equipment that will be used and let you play with it so you know how it works. He/she will talk to you and your parents about strategies you can use to help you feel calm and relaxed during the injection. For example, he/she might help you practice deep, slow breathing. He/she will also may recommend a medicine you need to help you relax during the injection.

Types of medicine you might have to help with the injection:

- Local anaesthetic cream (numbing cream) is a cream that is put on your skin to make it numb so you feel the injection less.
- Laughing gas (nitrous oxide) is a gas that you breathe in through a special tube/mask during the injection. It makes you sleepy and you will feel the injection less. If you are having laughing gas, the nurse will help you practice breathing through the tube before and during the injection.
- Midazolam is a liquid which you swallow half an hour before the injection. It makes you relaxed and sleepy, and might make you forget the injection afterwards. The liquid is sometimes mixed with cordial or chocolate sauce to make it taste sweet.

