

Piriformis Injection

This procedure is intended to relieve pain in the leg, hip and buttock regions. The piriformis muscle functions during both hip extension and hip flexion. This procedure also helps to validate the diagnosis of piriformis syndrome.

Conditions treated

You might benefit from a piriformis injection if you suffer from:

- Sciatica
- Piriformis Syndrome

Duration

Less than 30 minutes

How is it performed?

The patient will be lying on his/her stomach. The area to be injected will be cleaned using chloraprep™ or Betadine®. Local anesthetic will be used to numb the area. To ensure proper needle placement, the physician may utilize ultrasound or x-ray technology when inserting the needle. Once in the proper location, the physician will inject the solution of steroid and local anesthetic.

Prior to your appointment

You may continue taking all medications except blood thinners before the procedure.

What are the risks and side effects?

This procedure is a relatively safe, non-surgical treatment, with minimal risks of complications. Some of the most common or possible side effects are:

- Feeling of heaviness or weakness in the leg that could be permanent.
- Increased pain
- Infection
- Drowsiness the first day of the procedure is not uncommon if anesthesia is used.
- The most common side effect from the steroid medication is muscle cramping, increased appetite, flushing, headache, elevated blood sugar and nausea, which can last up to 2 weeks. Within the first 1-3 days, patients will commonly get a flushed, red face and a headache, which is related to the steroid medication itself.
- If you have congestive heart failure or are prone to fluid retention, you should monitor your weight each day after the procedure and call your doctor if you have a weight gain of more than 3 pounds.
- If you have glaucoma and experience blurred vision, you should call your ophthalmologist to have your eye pressures checked.
- Hiccups and temporary weakness in the legs have been reported, but again are very infrequent.

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What to expect after the procedure

You may feel a weak or numb sensation where the medication was injected. As the numbing medication wears off over the first few days, you may experience an increase in pain. Once the steroid begins to work, you should experience pain relief.

Ice is typically more helpful than heat during the first few days after the injection.

You should not drive or engage in physical activity for 24 hours following the procedure.

You may resume taking medications (except blood thinners) and regular eating habits immediately.

Slowly ease back into exercise routines over a period of one to two weeks.

You should call your doctor if you experience a fever over 101 within 72 hours of the procedure.

