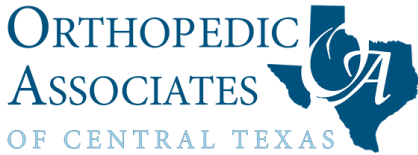


## Cortisone (Steroid) Injections



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**Cortisone injections are used to help relieve pain caused by inflammatory conditions when medications and physiotherapy alone do not provide adequate relief.** These conditions include osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, tendonitis, and bursitis. Cortisone works by reducing inflammation. It is injected directly into the affected area (usually a joint).

**Although cortisone injections are generally considered safe, there are certain risks.** If a doctor does not correctly target the muscle or joint, damage to nerves or tendons is possible although this is extremely rare. People with darker skin may experience some changes in skin color at the injection site. Some people may experience flushing or sweating.

**After the local anesthetic wears off, the injection area will ache as any injection would.** There may also be a significant increase in pain. This usually lasts for a day or so, and then as the cortisone starts to work, the discomfort goes away. After receiving an injection it is best to begin taking an over the counter anti-inflammatory medication or pain reliever such as Ibuprofen, Aleve, or Tylenol. You may also ice the area for comfort.

**Avoid strenuous activity for the next 48 hours.** Give the steroids some time to begin to work before resuming exercise or other strenuous activities.

**Diabetic Precautions:** There is a possibility that the steroid medication may cause increased blood sugar; therefore, check blood sugar levels several times a day for the next week.

**Multiple injections** in the same area over a short period of time (less than 3 to 4 months between injections) should be avoided because although the cortisone does reduce swelling and provide pain relief, it has also been shown to cause some damage to the tendons and joints after multiple injections in the same spot.