

## Patient information

### Facet Joint Injection Appointment Details

Imaging Department

#### Before Your Examination

There is no need for any special preparation for this examination. You should eat and drink normally.

Your hospital doctor or family doctor (GP) has advised that you need an injection of one or more of the joints of your lower back.

Any alternative treatments or procedures will have been discussed at your initial consultation with your referring practitioner.

#### What is a facet joint injection?

A facet joint injection is an X-ray examination of one or more of the joints of your spine using an injection of a colourless fluid known as an X-ray contrast agent, or dye and a steroid painkiller and/or local anaesthetic. It is carried out by a Radiologist (a doctor who specialises in X-rays).

#### What are the benefits of having a facet joint injection?

This procedure will help us make the correct diagnosis, so we will be able to give you the correct treatment. It should also give you some relief of your symptoms.

#### The risks of having a facet joint injection include:

- A very small risk of infection but this is very unlikely as the procedure is done under sterile conditions.
- There may be some bruising over the joint.
- We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives. Each X-ray examination gives us a small additional dose. The dose varies with each examination.
- **Patients of a Child-bearing Age:** X-rays may be harmful to an unborn child, especially in the early stages of pregnancy. If you are pregnant or there is any possibility of you being pregnant, please contact the X-ray department before your appointment.

#### What anaesthetic will I be given?

Local anaesthetic will be injected into the skin over the joint.

Local anaesthetic is drug-induced numbness: it may be provided by an anaesthetist, surgeon or other healthcare professional, depending on the technique used.

Like all medicines, local anaesthetics may sometimes cause side effects, as well as the effects that are needed. You may experience dizziness, blurred vision, drowsiness and occasionally loss of consciousness.

Serious side effects are rare, and include fits, low blood pressure, slowed breathing and changes in heartbeat, which may be life-threatening. If you have any concerns about any of these effects, you should discuss them with your doctor.

You will be given an opportunity to discuss anaesthetic options and risks before your procedure.

**If you are worried about any of these risks, please speak to your Doctor or a member of their team.**

## **The examination**

You will be escorted into the X-ray room and asked to lie on the X-ray table. The skin over the joint that needs to be examined will be cleaned and a local anaesthetic will be injected into the area to numb the skin and the tissue under it.

When the skin is numb a fine needle will be placed into your joint and a colourless fluid known as an X-ray contrast agent, or dye contrast agent (dye) will be injected while the Radiologist watches the X-ray images on a TV monitor.

While the needle is still in place the doctor will give you a painkilling injection into the joint or joints. This may give you some relief from your symptoms but is not guaranteed to be completely successful.

The needle is then removed.

## **After the examination**

When the examination is complete, a small plaster will be placed over the puncture site. A little discomfort may be noticed in your joint for one to two days after the examination and any strenuous exercise should be avoided for two days.

## **Results**

Your results are sent to the doctor who asked for this test to be carried out. This may be the hospital doctor or your family doctor (GP).

## **Cancellations**

If you are unable to keep this appointment, please let us know as soon as possible and we will arrange another for you.

If you fail to cancel and do not attend you will be discharged back to the care of the referring clinician.

## **Transport**

If your medical condition or mobility needs mean that you cannot get to your appointment any other way and you require transport you should ring the Patient Transport Services (PTS) who will arrange one for you.

**Tel: 0151 706 4676**

## **Car parking**

### **Royal Liverpool University Hospital**

Car parking for visitors and patients is available at the Q-Park multi-storey car park located on Prescot Street, L6 1LY.

For those with walking difficulties, there is a shuttle bus service operating between Q-Park and The Royal Liverpool University Hospital. The bus operates Monday to Friday, 6am-8pm. If you find you are waiting a while for the bus, the driver's number is displayed on the Q-Park exit.

Parking for Blue Badge holders is free at the Mount Vernon Street entrance. However, parking is limited, and you are advised to allow sufficient time for parking as you may need to redirect to the nearby Q-Park.

### **Broadgreen Hospital**

Car parking for visitors and patients is available in the multi-storey car park located at the entrance to the hospital. Disabled parking is available at the side of the Alexander wing on East Road. The car park is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and there is a charge.

There is a hospital free mini bus running every 15minutes to transport you around the site. The car park is continually monitored by the parking hosts, and by CCTV.

Please do not park on the central reservation on Thomas Drive; Traffic Wardens

**Please bring this leaflet with you when you attend the X-ray department.**

## **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## **Further information**

**If you have any further questions, or require further information, please contact the Radiology Appointments Office:**

**Tel: 0151 706 2759**

All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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