

Southern Pain & Neurological

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SACROILIAC JOINT INJECTION (SIJ)

What is the sacroiliac joint?

The sacroiliac joint is a large joint in the region of the lower back and buttocks where the pelvis joins with the spine. If the joints become irritated they may cause pain in the lower back, buttocks, abdomen, groin, or legs.

A sacroiliac joint injection serves is both diagnostic and therapeutic. First, by placing numbing medicine into the joint, the amount of immediate relief you experience will help confirm or rule out that the joint is a source of your pain. Second, the anti-inflammatory (cortisone/steroid) will help to reduce any inflammation that may exist within the joint(s) to provide more long term relief.

What happens during the procedure?

An IV will be started so that sedation can be given. You will lie on your stomach to allow the physician to visualize the sacroiliac joints using live x-ray guidance. The skin on the low back / buttocks is cleansed using sterile scrub (soap). Next, the physician numbs a small area of skin over the sacroiliac joint. This medicine stings for several seconds. After the numbing medicine is effective, your physician directs a small needle into the joint. A small amount of contrast (dye) is injected to insure proper needle position inside the joint space. Then, a small mixture of numbing medicine (anesthetic) and anti-inflammatory (cortisone/steroid) is injected. One or both joints may be injected depending on the location of your pain.

What happens after the procedure?

Immediately after the procedure, you will go back to the recovery area where you will be monitored for 30-60 minutes. Walk around and try to imitate something that would normally bring about your usual pain. You are then asked to report the percentage of pain relief. Your leg(s) may feel numb for a few hours. The steroids will begin working 3-5 days after the procedure and may continue to improve your pain for up to fourteen days. You should have a follow up visit 2 weeks after the procedure to determine if further treatment is needed. **You will not be able to drive the day of the procedure.**

General Pre/Post Procedure Instructions

You should not eat or drink anything after 12 o'clock the night before the procedure. If you are a diabetic, do not take your insulin or oral medication the morning of the procedure because you have had nothing to eat. If you are taking routine heart or blood pressure medicine, you should take it with a **sip** of water the morning of the procedure. You should not take medications that may give pain relief or lessen your usual pain. These medicines can be restarted after the procedure if they are needed. If you are on Coumadin, Heparin, Plavix, or other blood thinners (including aspirin and all medications that contain aspirin), you must notify the office well in advance so the timing of these medications can be coordinated with your primary physician.

You will be at the hospital / surgery center for a few hours for your procedure.

A driver must accompany you and be responsible for driving you home.

No driving is allowed the day of the procedure. You may return to your normal activities the day after the procedure, including returning to work.

If you are unable to keep this appointment, please give notice as soon as possible and at least 24 hours in advance during regular office hours. Thank you.

