

This leaflet explains about corticosteroid injection for the treatment of your scar. It explains the benefits and risks to this procedure, as well as what to expect. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse looking after you.

Corticosteroid injections

This is a simple procedure where a small syringe and needle are used to inject a steroid solution into your scar. This technique is commonly used to treat many types of scar. These injections are safe as very little steroid gets absorbed by the body.

The steroid we use is called Triamcinolone Acetonide.

Scar

Steroid injections are used for scars which are hard and raised.

They can often be red, painful or itchy.

These scars may be referred to as hypertrophic or keloid.

What are the benefits to corticosteroid injections?

The aim is to improve the appearance of the scar and reduce the symptoms of pain and itch. Your response to the treatment will vary, depending on the size and thickness of your scars.

Are there any side effects?

There are a few side effects which you may experience. These tend to improve with time. Your clinician may stop treatment if these cause any concern.

Common side effects

Pain: the procedure can be uncomfortable. The local anaesthetic can help reduce the pain of the corticosteroid injection; however, the site can remain sore for 24-48 hours afterwards. If undue pain or discomfort occurs after the treatment then you may take over the counter painkillers.

Bleeding: small amounts of spotting with blood can occur after the injection. Keep the plaster in place until this stops.

Occasional side effects

Atrophy: this is shrinkage of the tissue at and around the site of the scar, resulting in a depressed area.

Hyper/hypo pigmentation: changes in the skin colouring can occur at and around the site of the scar. This results in either lightening (hypopigmentation) or darkening (hyperpigmentation) of the skin colour.

Telangiectasia: small red spots called purpura may become visible at and around the injection site where tiny blood vessels get larger.

Steroid chalk: deposits of steroid resulting in small white flecks in the scar.

Rare side effects

Very little steroid is absorbed into the body. This means it is rare to have generalised side effects such as swelling of the face or an allergic reaction. Please tell your doctor or therapist immediately if you get severe pain in your abdomen, facial swelling or an unexpected rash.

Is there anything else I should discuss with my doctor or therapist before receiving a corticosteroid injection?

Please notify your doctor or therapist if you are pregnant, breast feeding or have had any of the following conditions: Tuberculosis (TB), bowel disorders, an ulcer, blood clots. cancer, thin (brittle) bones, high blood pressure, heart failure, psychiatric disorders, epilepsy, myasthenia gravis diabetes or glaucoma (increased pressure in your eyes).

What happens during my treatment?

You will be asked to lie down on a couch in a comfortable position. The scar area will be exposed and cleaned with a skin cleanser. A small amount of local anaesthetic will be injected under the scar area to numb it. Then a small amount of corticosteroid will be injected into the affected scar. You may have multiple small injections to treat the whole scar area.

Corticosteroid Injections in Scars for Adults and Children

Follow up appointments will be arranged on the day you are treated and will be approximately 4 weeks apart. The scar will be assessed at each visit to see if further injections are required. Repeat treatments are usually necessary. After six treatments you will automatically be referred for a medical review. Some individuals will need fewer than six treatments, but if you require more, treatment can continue after your medical review.

What happens after the treatment?

A plaster will be applied over the treated area if necessary. You are allowed to return to your normal activities straight away.

Information for children

For children, consent for the procedure will need to be obtained from their parent or carer. Due to the pain of the procedure children are unlikely to tolerate numerous injections. Therefore, we offer this procedure under a short general anaesthetic.

Who should I contact if I have any questions about my treatment with corticosteroid injections?

Please ring 01342 414024, Monday to Friday 9am-5pm and leave a message, your name and contact number on the answerphone. Someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Please note that this is not an emergency number. In an emergency please contact your GP or local A&E department

If you'd like to find out how you can support QVH, please visit www.supportqvh.org



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