

BACK NECK & JOINT



PROLOTHERAPY

Prolotherapy, (also known as sclerosing injections), is an injection-based therapy for chronic musculoskeletal pain. It works by prompting your body's natural repairing functions to heal injured or weakened joints, ligaments and tendons.

It is a natural, non-surgical method of stimulating growth when ligaments or tendons have been stretched/damaged or torn. This technique can be used in most unstable joints and is often used for sacroiliac joint (the joint connecting the sacrum and hip bone) dysfunction with instability or chronic low back pain.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Prolotherapy involves injecting a solution such as dextrose (glucose sugar water) into the painful ligament and tendon sites, and/or adjacent joints. It is safe and water-soluble, which is easily excreted from the body after having the initial desired effect.

The solution works by causing cells to lose water, which triggers a localised inflammatory reaction and stimulates the growth of collagen fibres and connective tissue. This process thickens, tightens and strengthens weak tissue, resulting in a stronger and more effective tendon or ligament.

As the weakened area heals, pain is usually reduced or eliminated. Results are not immediate, it can take up to six to eight weeks to feel the benefits. A series of three injections, usually six weeks apart are given under a local anaesthetic to encourage optimal tissue growth. Prolotherapy is often used as an alternative to cortisone injections, which can weaken connective tissue with long term use.

Whilst prolotherapy has been used for many years, few studies have properly evaluated the efficacy of this therapy. Most have been focused on the lower back, with contradictory findings. Nevertheless, there is good evidence for prolotherapy's use on the sacroiliac joint. Regardless of the solution used, injecting into ligaments have been shown in some patients to induce inflammation, resulting in significant long term pain relief and reduced disability.

RECOVERY FOLLOWING PROLOTHERAPY

You will be sore for several days following the injection. This is a good sign as it means that the injection is working as it is causing an inflammatory reaction, which strengthens the ligament.

However, if the flare up of pain persists for longer than a week, contact your doctor. Most importantly, you must avoid taking anti-inflammatories during this treatment.



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SIDE EFFECTS

Due to the local inflammation caused by prolotherapy, some bruising, pain, stiffness and/or swelling in the injected area may occur for the few days following the procedure. If pain persists, inform your doctor. Aside from a small amount of local bruising and bleeding, other potential side effects are uncommon. The risk of infection at the injection site is reduced using sterile techniques. Allergic reactions to the injected substances rarely occur.



MORE ON THE PAIN CHART

You should rate your pain between 0 and 10 before your injection, and after for 6 hours, firstly in 30 minute intervals and then hourly intervals. Ratings should be conducted in terms of movements and how you feel doing the things that most aggravate the pain.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



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