

## Accurately diagnosing and treating pain with personalized care

Our network of pain management physicians treats a variety of conditions, using comprehensive diagnostic techniques and non-surgical treatments for all musculoskeletal pain.

To learn more about conditions treated, visit [NationalSpine.com](http://NationalSpine.com) or ask your affiliated physician.

# Joint Injections

## Quick Relief for Painful Joints

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## Treatment Brochure

LEAVE PAIN  
BEHIND.  
**GET BUSY  
LIVING.**

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Joint pain is extremely common. Most complaints focus on the back, knees, shoulders, and hips, but joint pain can also affect elbows, wrists, fingers, ankles and toes.

When joint pain does not resolve in a reasonable amount of time with over-the-counter medication and/or physical therapy, an injection of medication directly into the joint is a frequently performed procedure that successfully relieves pain.

At our network of pain management centers, you'll find compassionate pain specialists who are experts in diagnosing and treating joint pain and can offer you treatments that give you the relief you deserve to improve your quality of life.



# Joint Injections

## Quick Relief for Painful Joints

### What causes joint pain?

Joints are places in the body where bones are connected, and most joints allow for movement and flexibility. Any damage to a joint from disease or injury can interfere with mobility and cause a lot of pain and inflammation.

Joint pain often is caused by arthritis, a degenerative disease that occurs when the cartilage lining the joint surface shrinks and wears thin, causing stress on the bone, inflammation, and enlargement of the joint. Other causes of joint pain include gout, injury or overuse.

### What are joint injections?

A joint injection typically contains a local anesthetic and a corticosteroid. The local anesthetic, similar to what you might receive at the dentist, provides early pain relief, while the steroid suppresses inflammation and decreases swelling for long-term pain relief.

In addition to treating joint pain, the injections are used as a diagnostic tool. The local anesthetic has a numbing effect in the joint, and the amount of immediate pain relief experienced will help confirm or rule out the joint as a source of pain.

A lot of times during the procedure, fluoroscopy (x-ray) is used to ensure proper placement of the needle and accurate delivery of the medication to the joint area.

### How long does it take?

Joint injections are safely performed on an outpatient basis. The procedure typically requires 20 minutes, including preparation time, and is followed by a short period of observed recovery time.

### What are the expected results?

After the injection, you may experience immediate but temporary pain relief from the local anesthetic. Because steroids need several days to deliver noticeable benefits, there is a window of time when the pain returns or even worsens. If the pain worsens, it usually subsides within a day or two. After that, pain relief is expected to last several months or longer. If needed, the injections may be repeated a few times during the year.

Generally, it's recommended that you take it easy the day of the procedure, but return to your usual activities the following day.

Although the injections do not change an underlying condition, they can break the cycle of pain and inflammation and allow time for exercise or physical therapy to strengthen muscles and get the joint moving again in order to decrease ongoing problems.

### Is there a longer lasting therapy?

Recent developments have yielded new treatments in addition to the traditional joint injections described above. Substances that supplement normal joint fluid can often be of use in the knee. Known as viscosupplementation, this process involves the injection of a chemical that naturally occurs in joint fluid to help lubricate the joint. This decreases further wear and tear. There are also other minimally invasive regenerative procedures, such as prolotherapy, or platelet rich plasma (PRP) therapy and stem cell therapy, which boost the body's natural healing processes.

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Medical Services are provided by independently operated physician practices that are branded as National Spine & Pain Centers.