

Cortisone Injection Flare: What to Expect?

What is an “Injection Flare”?

- Injection flare is a common side effect after a steroid injection
- Flares are caused by the corticosteroid medication used to treat common joint and tendon pathologies in the lower extremity
- The medication contains slow release crystals that can cause temporary irritation of the joint after the injection before they initiate long term pain relief

What to expect after an injection

- It is difficult to predict if you will have an injection flare - every patient responds differently depending on the severity of the symptoms and location of the injection
- Severity of injection flares range depending on the patient – some have mild soreness along the injection site, while others report severe pain that can somewhat be disabling for a short period of time
- Flares may occur immediately following the injection; however, with some patients post-injection pain may occur as late as 48 hours after the injection
- Injection flares typically last 1-2 days after receiving the treatment, although in some cases pain after an injection can last one to two weeks

How to Manage a Post-Injection Flare?

- Apply ice to the affected area immediately following the injection, and then on and off as needed for relief
- Modify activities as needed - limit use of treated body part to avoid increased discomfort
- You can use over-the-counter pain medications, such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen, to help with some of the discomfort after the injection
- Wear a removable splint or brace for support, protection, and pain relief