**STEROID INJECTION INFORMATION SHEET**

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**What are steroids?**
Corticosteroids are a class of medications that are related to cortisone. Cortisone is a hormone that is produced by the adrenal glands.

**Where are steroids injected?**
Steroids can be injected directly into the joints (intra-articular) or around the joints (peri-articular) or tendons.

**How do steroid injections work?**
Corticosteroids work to reduce inflammation (heat, redness, swelling, & pain) in and around the joint. As a result your child should have less pain, swelling, stiffness and warmth and be able to function better.

**Why are steroids injected locally?**
A steroid injection is an effective way to reduce inflammation in or around that joint. The medication goes directly to where it is needed. This is usually combined with other arthritis medications.

**What types of steroids are available for injection?**
There are a few different varieties of steroids available for injection. In children, the best choice is Triamcinolone Hexacetonide (Aristospan®) because it is effective and safe.

**What types of patients can receive steroid injections?**
Local steroid injections can be valuable treatment for patients with juvenile idiopathic arthritis when their disease does not respond completely to other arthritis medications. Local steroid injections can also be safely used for the treatment of conditions such as tendonitis, bursitis, and tendon nodules.

**How are the injections given?**
A joint injection is a simple procedure but it can be uncomfortable. The child must be able to cooperate by not moving. For a child older than 8 years, an injection can be done with local anesthetic (”freezing”), with or without mild sedation. For younger children, those who are very anxious or those who require multiple injections, an orthopedic surgeon will perform the injections with general anesthesia. In this case, the child will need a pre-op evaluation.

**Does the injection hurt?**
Because the injection is done with local anesthesia, the pain is similar to the pain for a blood test. If the injection is done under general anesthesia, no pain is experienced. In rare cases, the injection causes more pain for a few hours which can be treated with acetaminophen (Tylenol).

**How long does it take for the injection to work and how long will it last?**
Most children feel better after 24-48 hours but it may take 4-6 weeks for the full effect to be felt. The duration of the effect varies among children.

**How often can we have repeat injections?**
If the first injection is effective, then an injection may be done again if the disease flares up. In general, the limit is 2 injections per year (for each joint), since too many injections may harm tendons, ligaments, and cartilage.

**What to do after an injection?**
If possible, it is best to rest the joint for 24 hours (minimize walking and no gym). Please continue all other arthritis medications. Your child may be given a splint to wear.

**What are the possible side effects of an injection?**
Most joint injections result in no side effects. Side-effects which rarely occur include: injury to the joint or tendon, loss of the fat layer below the skin (causing a small dimple), loss of skin pigmentation (vitiligo), calcification around the joint, and joint infection (see below). Systemic effects, like increased blood pressure or acne may occur due to absorption of some of the steroid from the joint but this is very rarely observed with Aristospan®. It is only seen when many joints are injected at one time.

**What to do if the injected joint becomes very painful, red, or swollen?**
As your doctor has explained, one of the very rare (1 in 15,000) risks of a joint injection is infection. Please call immediately if a joint becomes very painful, red or swollen, or if the child develops fever.
IMPORTANT : PLEASE READ

Information provided in this pamphlet is for educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice or instruction of a professional healthcare practitioner, or to substitute medical care. Contact a qualified healthcare practitioner if you have any questions concerning your care.