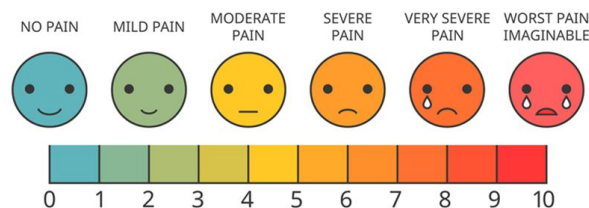


Managing Pain Relief Exceptions



Injections will contain an **anesthetic (fast acting numbing)** and often accompanied by a **steroid (long acting, anti inflammatory)**. When the anesthetic wears off, your symptoms may begin return in part or in full. The steroids usually require three to five days to provide pain relief. Sometimes a “flare up” of symptoms may occur while waiting for the steroid to work.

What if my pain returns quickly?

When symptoms or pain return day 2 or 3 post injection, some patients interpret this as the injection “not working.” However, this temporary pain relief not only tells Dr. Kropp significant diagnostic information, but is actually an encouraging sign. The numbing medication would not have provided any relief at all if the injection was in the wrong spot. This is why we request information for “At Best” and “Overall” pain relief. *For instance, at best, perhaps the day of the injection, your pain may have been 90-100% improved, but on Day 3 only 60% or maybe symptoms returned to baseline (0%).*

Is it common to need more than one injection?

Depending on a patient’s specific case, it may take several injections to provide longer lasting, or more significant pain relief. This is common, and if your pain does return sooner than you were hoping do not be discouraged! Dr. Kropp will only recommend further injections if he feels it is in your best interest, if they are truly “not working” then he will present other options or next steps for you.

Sometimes symptoms move!

It is important to acknowledge if your symptoms have moved after an injection. Sometimes a patient may feel like they have made no progress because their pain level is the same, however their pain is now in a different location, or perhaps distributing differently. *For instance, the pain moved from left to right, or the symptoms that were going down your arm or leg are gone, and only localized pain remains.* This is valuable diagnostic information, it tells Dr. Kropp not only the injection worked, but often indicates where to go next!

“My symptoms returned after I ...”

We expect patients to take it easy for 7 days after a procedure. This is important to let your body absorb and process the medication effectively, and also to allow your body to rest. Sometimes a patient will be doing well and feels confident to return to activities (*like shoveling snow, going to the gym, or working on your truck*) and the symptoms return soon after. This doesn’t mean the injection didn’t work, but the body wasn’t ready to resume that activity yet. The injections do not “cure” things overnight. If you do an activity that leads to returning symptoms, don’t worry, you can discuss it with Dr. Kropp at your follow up. Try your best to take it easy for the full 7 days and only resume certain activities after consulting Dr. Kropp.

Keep your follow up!

Even if you are “all better” or feel like you want to try a different treatment method it is important to keep your follow up with Dr. Kropp. The appointment can be as brief as you like, but it is essential to have official documentation on how you responded to the procedure. This is important for future treatment either in our office, or by a different specialist, a surgeon and is often required by insurance companies. We will also be able to answer any questions you have, and discuss different treatment options, or even switch gears to a different body region that is bothering you.