

# Bursa Injections

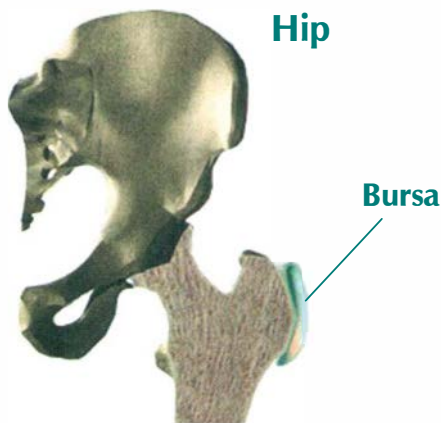
This handout answers some of the most common questions patients have about bursa injections. If you have other questions, please do not hesitate to call the Norman Prince Spine Institute at **401-444-3777** (Providence) or **401-845-1190** (Newport).

## What is a bursa injection?

A bursa injection is used to treat pain in the buttocks, hips or upper legs in patients who have bursitis (swollen and irritated bursa). A bursa is a small pad that is filled with fluid and acts as a cushion between your bones and your muscles and tendons. Your bursa can become irritated from daily wear and tear or injury, or because your legs are different lengths.

Some patients have an irritated bursa on the outside of their hip bones or under the fold of the buttocks, over the “sit bones.” This can cause pain in the hip, buttock or knee. Sometimes the pain is worse when climbing stairs, running, lying on your side that has the inflamed bursa, or sitting for a long time.

During the procedure, the bursa is injected with a mixture of a local anesthetic and a steroid. The local anesthetic will numb the area. The steroid will help lower the swelling, which should reduce your pain.



## Do I have to do anything to prepare for the procedure?

Once your procedure is scheduled, we will give you instructions on how to prepare. It is very important for your safety to tell us if you:

- Take a blood thinner (for example, warfarin/ Coumadin, Lovenox, or Plavix),
- Take any aspirin products or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen (for example, Advil or Motrin) or naproxen (for example, Aleve),
- Have a condition that prevents your blood from clotting normally, or
- Have any allergies to latex, local anesthetics, X-ray dye, or seafood.

Some patients will have another procedure on the same day they receive their bursa injection. These patients must have someone drive them home after the procedures. If they do not, their procedures will be canceled. We will let you know if this applies to you.

## Does the procedure hurt?

You may feel some stinging from the needle. You may also feel some pressure or an ache when your doctor injects the medications into your bursa.



## What happens during the procedures?

A bursa injection generally involves the steps below:

1. Your vital signs (such as your blood pressure pulse) will be measured. You will also be asked some general questions about your health.
2. You will lie on your stomach or on the side that does not have pain. Your doctor will feel the area to find the most painful spot. This is where he or she will inject the medication.
3. The area that will be injected will be cleaned with an antiseptic. This keeps the area free from germs.
4. Your doctor will inject the numbing medication and the steroid medication into your bursa, at the most painful spot.

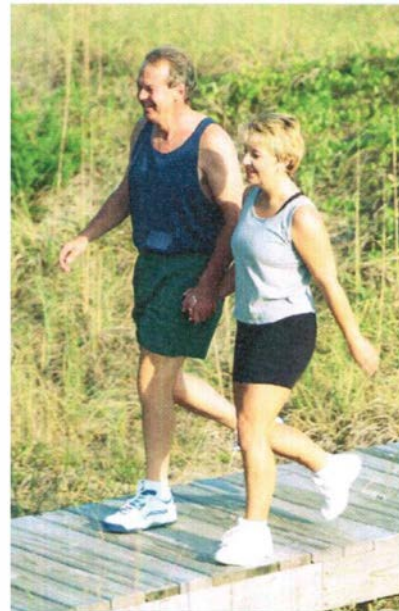
The entire procedure takes about 5 minutes. You will be awake during the procedure and may ask questions at any time.

## Are there any side effects from the procedure?

A bursa injection is generally a safe procedure. The most common side effect after the bursa injection is soreness where you were injected. There is also a risk of temporary numbness in your leg from the local anesthetic.

## How will I feel after the procedure?

- You will feel relief from your pain right away because of the local anesthetic. But, the local anesthetic will wear off 2-3 hours after the bursa injection. At that point, your pain will probably return.
- You will have longer pain relief once the steroid medication starts to work. This could take 2-10 days after the procedure. You should keep taking your regular pain medication if needed after the procedure.
- The pain relief from a bursa injection will last usually for several months (though this differs from patient to patient.)
- Bursa injections work better in some people than in others. If you do not have any relief or if your pain gets worse, we will work with you to find the source of your pain and explore other treatment options



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