

# Hyaluronic Acid Injection

## What is Hyaluronic Acid

Hyaluronic acid occurs naturally within the body. It is a part of the synovial fluid which lubricates the joint and acts as a cushion and keeps them working smoothly. When you have osteoarthritis (OA), or damage to the chondral, surface of the joint, the Synovial fluid is produced in smaller amounts and this can increase load on the joint and cause pain. These injections are sometimes called "viscosupplementation," which literally means they add to the fluid in your joints. Studies show hyaluronic acid injections may work better than painkillers for some people with OA. Other studies have shown they also may work as well as corticosteroid injections or be combined with other substances such as corticosteroids or platelet enriched plasma.

Hyaluronic acid (HA) injections can give some reduction in pain in osteoarthritic joints. However, the improvements are usually temporary (lasting a maximum of 6-9 months). HA injections are generally very safe, although certain people may experience some minor side effects. The aim of this patient information leaflet is to provide you with the necessary knowledge for your information.

## What are hyaluronic acid injections and how are hyaluronic acid injections used?

The hyaluronic acid used in injections is a synthesised (man-made) version of this substance. A range of hyaluronic acid injections exist including Suplasyn One shot, Durolane. Some patients may require a series of injections and some injections can be delivered on a one-off basis.

## Will I need another injection?

If you find the hyaluronic acid injection helpful, and other treatments have been unsuitable or have not helped, the injection may be repeated. There is currently no evidence to suggest any long term harm to tissues from having repeat injections of hyaluronic acid.

## Potential risks and side effects.

Most people have HA injections without any side effects. A small proportion of people may have some pain for a day or two after the injection, but this usually resolves quickly and can be managed with relative rest and over-the-counter painkillers.

## Will it hurt?

They can be a bit uncomfortable at the time of the injection, but many people find that they are not as bad as they initially feared.

## Flare up of pain

Occasionally people may notice a flare up of their pain within the first 24-hours after injection at the site of injection or within the joint. This normally settles within a couple of days. Simple painkillers, such as paracetamol, may help.

## Infection

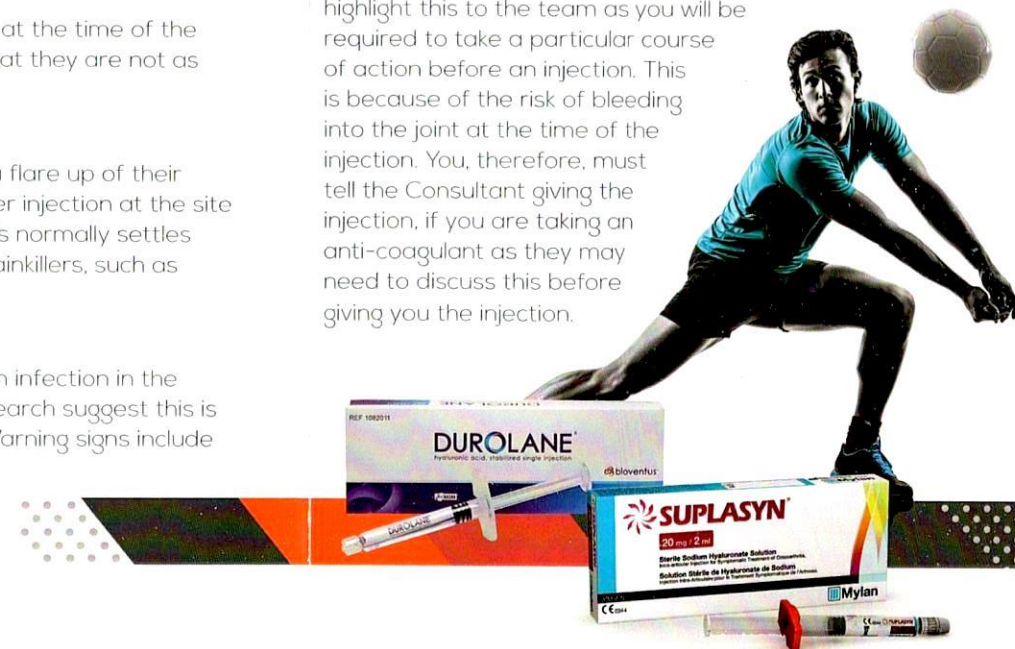
It is very rare that you may get an infection in the joint at the time of injection. Research suggest this is less than 1 in 20,000 injections. Warning signs include worsening pain and redness and swelling of the joint. If concerned you should ALWAYS call our office or seek medical attention.

## Other potential side effects

There are very few other reported side effects that have been linked with the use of hyaluronic acid. Rarely you can unexpectedly develop Anaphylaxis (allergic reaction) and we have appropriate emergency care medication and facilities on site in case of such event.

## Can I take other medicines along with the hyaluronic acid?

Yes, you can take other medications alongside the hyaluronic acid injection. There are no known significant drug interactions that occur with hyaluronic acid. However, if you are taking a blood- thinning drug, such as Warfarin, or NOAC medication you MUST highlight this to the team as you will be required to take a particular course of action before an injection. This is because of the risk of bleeding into the joint at the time of the injection. You, therefore, must tell the Consultant giving the injection, if you are taking an anti-coagulant as they may need to discuss this before giving you the injection.





## What happens when I have a hyaluronic acid injection?

The Consultant in Sports and Exercise Medicine, who will be performing your injection, will choose the most appropriate injection for your condition and also discuss the price and alternatives to the injection. An ultrasound scan is usually used at the time of the injection to guide the injection and confirm it is in the joint. (On occasion this is not required and your Consultant will discuss this with you)

## What happens after the injection?

The local anaesthetic used to prepare the injection will relieve some of your pain within minutes, but the effect may wear off after an hour or two. It usually takes at least 10 days for the effect of the HA to begin to work and we expect it to continue to have a positive effect for between 3 and 12 months. We usually advise that you have someone drive you home after the injection as the joint may feel stiff, but it is not mandatory, if you can wait an hour or so in the clinic after injection



You may feel sore at the injection site for the next 2-4 days. For the first 24 hours, if needed, you may apply ice to the site for 10 minutes every hour to decrease pain, or take a pain killer such as Paracetamol.



## Risks and Side effects

Below is a summary of the risks/side effects from having hyaluronic acid injection:

- Serious side effects are rare but can include:
- Joint and soft tissue infections.
- Anaphylaxis (allergic reaction)

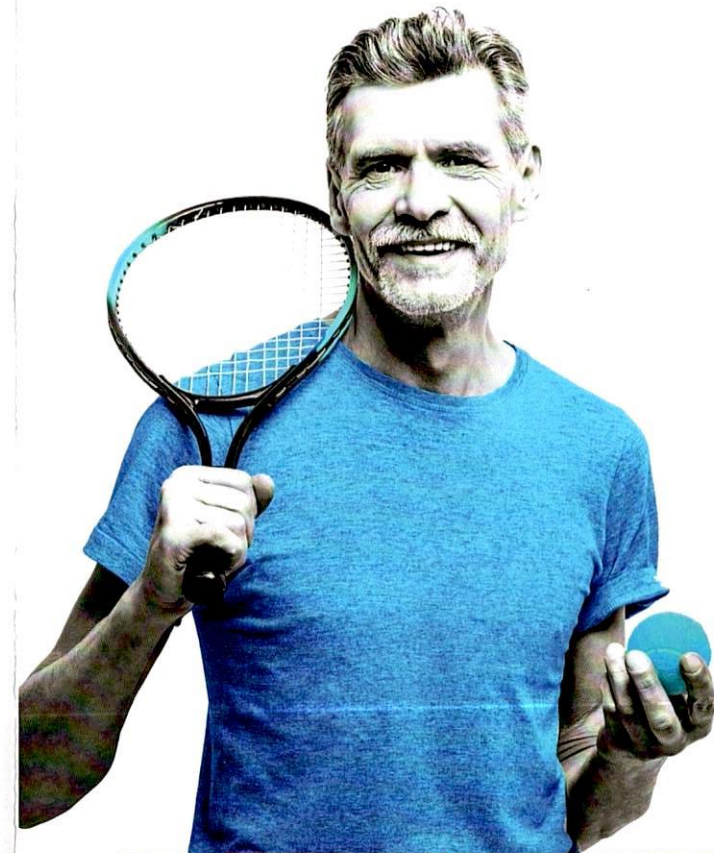
Other potential side effects include:

- Post-injection flare of pain at injection site.
- Injury or trauma to neurovascular structures during the injection procedure.

You will be asked to remain in the clinic for thirty minutes following the injection to allow observation for possible adverse reactions.

We will show you an exercise program either before the injection or after that we would like you to carry out starting 5 days post injection.

## Hyaluronic Acid Injection



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