

## Regenerative Injection Therapies by Dr. Angela Cortal Post Injection Care

### Post Procedure Care and Instructions:

1. Avoid any water submersion (bath, hot tub) for *48 hours*. Showers are ok at any time following. We are wanting to keep all injection sites very clean for the following 48 hours until they heal up.
2. *Take a break!* Rest, recuperate and allow any discomfort and pains or swelling to subside. But don't get too stagnate- get gentle activity in early (such as walking and non-physical work within two days). You should feel comfortable to resume your normal work and daily activities (that are not too physical or aggravating) within a week.
  - a. *Mild to moderate pain, swelling, discomfort and even aggravation of your complaint is very normal and to be expected post-injections.* We are literally signaling the body to regenerate the healing process, which can involve some swelling and temporary inflammation (like what happens after an acute injury). This can come on all at once or in periodic waves.
  - b. *Signs that you should get urgent care treatment:* Prolonged joint swelling that worsens and lasts over 1 week; fever, chills, sweating (feeling sick in general), headache, redness and/or heat occurring with the swelling. Do not wait for a return visit, this may be a very rare case of infection and needs to be treated right away in urgent care or at the ER.
  - c. Return to physical activity/sports: Discuss this with Dr. Cortal as the timing depends on what your activity and injury history was as well as what type and extent of injection therapy. Generally non-aggravating exercise can be resumed within a few days to week, and more challenging exercise (such as jogging after knee injections) can be resumed comfortably within three weeks, though may need to be modified depending on your treatment plan.
3. Doctor contact info:
  - a. If there is something specific about your treatment plan that you do not understand, or would like clarification on, make sure to address these at your re-evaluation.
  - b. For emergent concerns, the after-hours secure voicemail number is 503-380-5833. If you are calling, it is because we need to imminently decide where to triage your concern (urgent care vs ER), and you cannot wait until the next available in-office appointment. Please no unsolicited updates or requests for additional care/ treatment recommendations.
4. If you need to take the edge off uncomfortable swelling and pain (particularly if it is interfering with sleep and normal functioning), look to natural anti-inflammatories, **not NSAIDs** (Aspirin, Advil/Ibuprofen, Aleve/Naproxen, etc though Tylenol is ok for temporary use). NSAIDs will do more harm than good for your healing process. Instead, prior to your procedure, discuss oral natural anti-inflammatories such as fish oil and curcumin, that won't hijack the healing cascade that you're wanting to stimulate.
  - a. Massage and/or chiropractic may be used prior to or after the injection therapy.
  - b. Alternating hydrotherapy is a great supportive home remedy (alternate hot and ice packs, leaving each on only 1-3 minutes).
  - c. Bioavailable curcumin, such as Curcumasorb.

- d. Cannabinoid compounds (such as CBD products, oils) do not interfere at all with our procedures.

**Expectations of Benefit/ Timeline of Improvement:**

1. Improvements (in pain, strength, stability and mobility) may be noted immediately, a few days later, but are generally noted to be cumulative over weeks. The full therapeutic affect builds over the 3-4 weeks post-injection, depending on the health and integrity of the body structure we are working on. Effects of a course of treatment are cumulative, with subsequent prolotherapy sessions building on prior gains. Severe cases may need multiple treatments to see a noticeable effect.

**When another session is indicated:**

Depending on the procedure, a series of treatment is indicated in some cases, but not others. Some only need one prolotherapy session to meet their goals. Others may need up to three for a mild to moderate case, or six up to ten for an extensive, severe case, such as severe osteoarthritis with multiple areas of tendonitis, ligament damage, meniscus tear, etc.

The first session is our “trial,” to see initially what effect prolotherapy has on your pain, swelling, instability and immobility. Subsequent sessions are indicated if you see a positive, but partial response. A 25% or 50% improvement after the first session is common. In this case we expect a similar response after the second session.

Courses of treatment are all individualized, based on your need. Very often the number of injections decreases through the course of treatment.

Some clues that you are due for a ‘tune-up’ or repeat session are that we see a substantial initial improvement (pain, mobility, etc.) of 75% or greater that has since backslid to only 50% or less. Back-sliding is usually only noted when the course of treatment has not been completed. Also repeat treatment may be needed to help heal a recent injury, trauma or overuse injury (or further repetitive motion damage).