

Important Notes

Do not stop any anti-platelet/ anti-coagulant medications (eg. Aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin, etc.) unless instructed to do so by a HealthPointe@CAO Physician.

Questions or Concerns

For any additional information, questions, or concerns regarding your appointment or booking process, please feel free to contact our clinic at 403-309-2001

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Cervical Facet Joint Injection



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What is a Lumbar Facet Joint Injection?

This outpatient procedure is used to help with diagnosing and/or treating head, neck, shoulder, and upper back pain.

What are Cervical Facet Joints?

Facet joints are found on either side of the spine. Each of these joints is about the size of a thumbnail. There are 7 cervical vertebrae that are connected by facet joints.

Facet joints connect vertebrae to one another along with guiding the spine when moving.

Injury to a facet joint typically involves damage to the cartilage inside the joint and connecting ligaments surrounding the joint. Pain from an injured cervical facet joint may range from mild muscle tension to more severe pain.

This pain can radiate into different areas, often the shoulder blade area, depending on which facet joint is irritated.

Do I have Cervical Facet Joint Pain?

if you have pain in the head, neck, shoulder, or upper back area when turning your head for greater than 2 months you may have facet joint pain. Tests such as X-rays or MRIs do not always show if the facet is the reason for your pain.

The best way to test if you have this pain is to block the pain signal from the medial branch nerves which send the nerve signals from the facet joints to the brain.

Injection Procedure

A thin needle is inserted into the cervical facet joint under fluoroscopy (a type of X-ray). Fluoroscopy is used to position the needle accurately and safely. A small amount of dye is injected by the Physician to assess if the needle is in the proper position. This can cause some of your symptoms to be reproduced.

With the correct needle position, the joint is then injected with a combination of a corticosteroid (anti-inflammatory) and an anesthetic into the irritated facet joint.

How Long Should the Pain Relief Last?

After your Cervical Facet Joint Injection, you will be monitored for approximately 15-30 minutes. The clinic will give you appropriate directions to follow for care following the procedure.

We caution against driving after any neck procedure.

Post-procedure soreness may be experienced. Typically this soreness is caused by muscle and nerve irritation. You may also notice some numbness and tingling in the neck and arm for a maximum of 4-6 hours.

There should be pain relief immediately lasting 4-6 hours. The corticosteroid takes about 1-week post-injection for it to take optimal effects. Pain relief lasts anywhere from a few weeks to several months, depending on the ultimate cause of your facet joint pain.