

Pain Management – Injection of Therapeutic Substance into Joint

Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital.

Guidance for Patients

Persistent pain (chronic pain/ long term pain) is when pain persists or reoccurs for longer than 3 months. There are a multitude of reasons where an individual experiences pain. Sometimes, there may not be specific reason for this pain. Anaesthetic and steroid injections are a common treatment for several conditions, where the medication will be delivered close to the suspected cause, this can help to identify the source and also treat pain by reducing inflammation.

Long term pain conditions can be treated in a multitude of ways. Medication, injections, physiotherapy and patient education plays a great role in managing chronic pain conditions.

While waiting for treatment, there are a number of things a pain patient can do:

- Exercising when possible and keeping active are key in the management of persistent pain. Lack of activity can contribute to stiff muscles and can lead to muscle weakness.
- Medications - simple analgesics like paracetamol and ibuprofen will help in musculoskeletal pain. Sometimes, stronger pain killers like codeine may help. Your GP may be able to prescribe other medications if needed.
- Sleep can be significantly affected in certain patients. Sleep hygiene can help in this situation:
 - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/>
 - <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-hygiene>
- There are a number of resources available which can provide you with skills and healthy tips to self-manage pain:
 - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/ways-to-manage-chronic-pain>
 - <https://www.paintoolkit.org>

It is important that while you are waiting for your procedure you remain as medically fit and active as possible.

If you have any long-standing conditions such as high blood pressure or diabetes you should get this reviewed at your doctor's surgery to make sure it remains well controlled. This will also help prevent any unnecessary delays when you come for your pre-operative assessment. Maintaining a well-balanced diet is also important, as is reducing any excessive weight that may be impacting on your general health. If you are a current smoker it would be advisable to seek support to help with stopping. Alcohol consumption should be within accepted limits.

You should continue to take your prescribed medications and only stop after consultation with your GP.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

It is recommended that you take regular exercise (20 minutes per day until you are short of breath, increasing a bit at a time). Take a brisk walk or consider an exercise bike.

Support is available at **Healthy Cornwall** to help you with:

- Weight management
- Healthy eating
- Stopping smoking
- Physical activity

Contact **Healthy Cornwall** at:

- Telephone - 01209 61500
- Email – healthy.cornwall@cornwall.gov.uk
- Website – www.healthycornwall.org.uk

Good Mental Health

There are many ways you can keep your mental health fit and well, just as you would your physical health.

Support is available at [Mental health - NHS Kernow CCG - NHS Kernow CCG](#)

Other Useful Information

Further links which may help you manage your condition whilst you await treatment:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/>

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

Contact Us

Email: rch-tr.accessteam@nhs.net

Telephone: 01872 255084