

Procedure Information

Aspiration of Joint Fluid

Introduction

Aspiration of joint fluid is a minor surgical procedure to remove accumulating fluid from the space around a joint by using a needle and syringe. The aspirated joint fluid will send to laboratory for microbiological and chemical test.

Outcomes

The procedure can help to identify causes of joint swelling or arthritis, such as infection, gout and rheumatoid disease. In addition, it may also be used to relieve pressure due to fluid collection on surrounding area of a joint.

Procedures

1. The procedure is performed under local anaesthesia.
2. The affected joint will be cleaned by disinfectant prior to the procedure.
3. A fine needle with a syringe attached is inserted to the affected joint and joint fluid is aspirated under suction from the syringe.
4. The needle is removed and a waterproof dressing is applied over the aspiration site.
5. The aspirated fluid is sent to Pathology Department for examination.

Possible Risks and Complications

1. Local bruising
2. Mild bleeding
3. Septic arthritis (rare)
4. Crystallizing, shrinkage or loss of pigment of skin at the aspiration site, increased blood sugar and aggravation of preexisting infection (If cortisone medications are used)
5. Weight gain, puffy face and trunk, easy bruising (if multiple injections with corticosteroids are given too frequently)
6. Local inflammation and swelling of the affected joint (If hyaluronic acid derivatives are injected)

** The risks listed above are in general terms and the possibility of complications is not exhaustive. Please understand that even though all procedures are carried out with utmost professionalism and care this does not rule out the possibility of complications arising.

Pre-procedure Preparations

1. Good hygiene can prevent infection.
2. The procedure and possible complications will be explained by the doctor and a consent form must be signed prior to the procedure.
3. Please inform the doctor and nurse all your past medical history, previous surgical operations, current medication and any complication with drug or anaesthesia. Please inform doctor if you are taking medications that affect blood coagulation, such as Aspirin, Warfarin, Xarelto or Pradaxa and Chinese medication.
4. Female who are or might be pregnant must inform to the doctor.

Post-procedure Instructions

1. The aspiration site should be kept clean and dry. The dressing should be removed as advised by the doctor.
2. Minor bleeding and discomfort may occur after the procedure. Prescribed pain medications may be taken as needed.

Advices on Discharge

1. You may feel joint sore, discomfort or appear bruised on the affected joint area for a few days. These symptoms are normal and will be gradually subsided afterwards.
2. Apply ice pad as recommended by your doctor to relieve swelling and pain.
3. Immediately consult your doctor or return to hospital for professional attention in the event of severe pain with redness and increase swelling, bleeding or discharge from the aspiration site, restricted range of motion of the joint, shivering, high fever over 38°C or 100°F, or any other unusual symptoms etc.
4. Walking aids may be used in the early stages of recovery to aid mobility.
5. Any follow-up consultations should be attended as scheduled.

Should there be any enquiries or concerns, please consult the attending doctor.

Under the professional care of the doctor, you will gradually recover. We wish you all the best during your treatment and recovery.

If you have any questions after reading the entire leaflet, please write them down in the spaces provided in order for the doctor to further follow-up.

Compiled by Union Hospital Operating Theatre (OT) Governance Committee

The above information is for reference only, please enquire your physician for details
Our Hospital reserves the RIGHT to amend any information in this leaflet without prior notification