

## INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PROCEDURE

### **PIRIFORMIS MUSCLE INJECTION**

#### **H**ow we do the procedure

The **piriformis muscle** is a large muscle in the buttock that opens the hip when the knee is bent, such as the position one is in when sitting on the floor with the knees bent and feet touching. When the muscle is always tense, it can cause pain in the buttock that can go into the back of the thigh or even down the leg. A piriformis muscle injection is an injection directly into an area of the muscle that is chronically contracted or tense. A long acting steroid (NOT the kind that increases muscle size in athletes) and local anesthetic agent are injected. Local anesthetic is injected into this trigger point to cause the muscle to relax so that blood flow can get into the area and remove lactic acid and other by-products that have built up. Once the primary trigger point area relaxed, physical therapy can more effectively stretch out the surrounding muscle areas and make it more likely that the effect will be long lasting. Your Physical Therapist will discuss particular exercises that should help.

#### **W**hat to expect

You will have some pain on injection, since we are trying to inject right into the trigger point in the piriformis muscle. The area around the injection may get numb. Rarely, part of your leg may get temporarily numb or weak. This should last for several hours and gradually wear off. During the period of numbness and muscle relaxation, stretching and performing your physical therapy exercises, should prevent the pain from coming back as severe. The steroid will begin working in 1-5 days to help to reduce inflammation. We can repeat the injection if your pain returns. There is a limit of 3 steroid injections in a 10 month period. If no substantial effects are obtained after one or two injections, we will discuss other alternatives.

#### **R**isks

The risks include bleeding, infection and a reaction to any of the medications used for the procedure. We use sterile technique to avoid infections. If you are taking a "blood thinner" (anticoagulant), we will give you special instructions before the procedure to avoid excess bleeding.

#### **S**afety Precautions

Since your ability to drive may be impaired, we ask that you have someone drive you home.

Injected steroids occasionally cause nervousness, difficulty sleeping, a flushed feeling (like hot flashes), an increased appetite, an elevated blood sugar, or a "moon face" (rounded face) for several days. (Steroids are used occasionally for this procedure.)