Diagnostic Injection: Local anesthetic is injected into the joint or other tissues. Usually you will notice partial relief of your pain for 1-3 hours. Please write down how much your pain was relieved and for how long the relief lasted to help us sort out exactly where your pain is coming from. Even if your pain was not temporarily relieved that might be important information too.

Aspiration: The skin is first made numb with local anesthetic injected through a tiny needle. A second (aspiration) needle is then used to draw off the accumulated fluid. Sometimes cortisone may then be injected through the aspiration needle to prevent recurrence of severe joint swelling.

Cortisone or Ketorolac Injection (Joint, Bursa, Tendon Sheath, Soft Tissue): The inflamed area is injected with local anesthetic mixed with a small amount of either Cortisone (steroids like Depomedrol or Celestone) or Ketorolac (a non-steroidal trade named Toradol). It is common to experience temporary complete relief of pain as well as surprising numbness around or below the injected area. Normal feeling will usually return in 1-3 hours as the local anesthetic wears off. There may be temporary increase in your discomfort after the local wears off for a day or two until the Cortisone/Toradol has a chance to dissolve and begins to reduce the inflammation that caused your initial symptoms. Injections into tissues, bursal sacs or tendon sheaths may take several weeks to relieve the pain. Rarely patients experience redness about the face & neck within a day of the injection. This usually goes away within 2 days without treatment but over the counter antihistamines such as Benadryl may speed the reduction in redness. If you are diabetic, you will usually notice a significant rise in your blood sugar for 36 hours or so after Cortisone injections before it returns to normal.

Viscosupplementation (Synvisc, Suppartz, Euflexxa, Hyalgan, Gel 1): Once the acute swelling in the arthritic knee joint has subsided, three injections over three weeks (one injection with Synvisc1 or Gel1) are given to initially lubricate the joint, and then to provide longer term reduction in pain & inflammation. Most people notice improvement after the second or third injection in the series finding it lasts for months. Viscosupplementation may be repeated at six-month intervals if the arthritis pain returns.

After your injection: Once you get home, remove the band-aid, and, if possible, apply ice (frozen peas or corn works well also) to the injection site for at least ½ hour. Reducing your activities for a day or two after your injection will also help to prevent swelling. Gradually resume your daily activities as your comfort permits. Be sure to gently stretch the tight tissues so you will regain full movement and gradually introduce new exercises, as you feel better. Reapply the ice anytime you feel increased pain or swelling in the injected area. Your goal is to resume your usual activities without provoking the inflammation and swelling that causes pain. If your throat feels tight or you experience any difficulty breathing after your injection, go immediately to the nearest Emergency Department.

You may take over the counter pain relievers such as Aleve (2 tablets twice a day) or Ibuprofen/Advil/Motrin (3 tablets four times daily) for the pain if you are not already taking a prescription anti-inflammatory (NSAID) drug. Be sure to call us (843) 705-8910 if your pain becomes unusually severe or does not decrease within the first few days.