



## **A4 Understand the pros and cons of medical interventions**

Injections are made over or into joints, around specific nerves or sometimes around soft tissues.

Injections can help your pain by reducing some of the pain signals and, though pain relief may be short-lived, some people can get significant and long lasting pain relief from these injections. It may not be a cure. Sometimes injections are used to help to identify the area from where your pain is arising thus helping with diagnosis. Injections usually contain local anaesthetic often with a small amount of steroid. The injections are usually undertaken alongside other treatments such as physiotherapy and pain management.

The pain relief gained from injections is generally short lived and the benefits often diminish with repeated procedures. The main purpose of interventions in pain management are to enable you to increase your level of exercise, decrease your reliance on pain medications and improve your level of function, thus enabling you to develop pain management strategies.

Disadvantages of injections include the risks of:

- Infection.
- Temporary increase in pain.
- Increase in blood sugar levels in diabetics.
- Possible long term effects on organs, bone density and tissues.

This information sheet is for general education only and does not list all the uses and side-effects associated with the drugs and interventions. For more information, speak to your pain nurse, doctor or pharmacist.

**This information sheet was adapted from the following websites:**

[www.arthritisresearchuk.org](http://www.arthritisresearchuk.org)

[www.britishpainsociety.org/british-pain-society-publications/patient-publications/](http://www.britishpainsociety.org/british-pain-society-publications/patient-publications/)

[www.fpm.ac.uk/faculty-of-pain-medicine/patient-information](http://www.fpm.ac.uk/faculty-of-pain-medicine/patient-information)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.patient.info](http://www.patient.info)

<http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/faculty-of-pain-medicine/patient-information>