

## Facet Joint Injections & Nerve Root Blocks

Injections into the sliding joints at the back of the spine (facet joints) or next to the nerves of the neck or lower back as they leave the spine (nerve root injection or blocks) are ways to treat neck, back and leg pain not helped by other treatments.

### Preparation

Please inform us if you are on medication to thin your blood (e.g., Warfarin, Aspirin).

If you are on special drugs or have diabetes and are on insulin, take your usual medicines and diet.

### Procedure

While you lie flat on your stomach on an x-ray table, the cleaned back area will be injected with local anaesthetic.

Guided by x-ray or CT scanning, a needle will be put into the facet joint or next to the nerve. Local anaesthetic and cortisone (steroid) solution will be injected. This may be uncomfortable for a very short time during the injection until the local anaesthetic takes effect.

This procedure takes approximately 30 minutes. Afterwards you may stay with us for a short time. You may then continue your usual activities or rest if you wish.

It is best if you do not drive yourself home, but if unavoidable, allow 2 hours for the effect of local anaesthetic to wear off.

### How long will the treatment last?

The effect varies for different people. There may be relief for months to years, but this is a treatment, not a cure, for back problems. Some people get no benefit.

### What are the side effects?

There may be slight soreness or bruising at the needle site. Any other problems are very rare.

You may temporarily experience some numbness in the injected area or down the affected leg. Rarely does headache occur as a side effect. You should minimise physical activity for 12 hours after the injection.

Very rarely serious side effects causing permanent neurological damage occur, which are independent of operator skill. The radiologist and your referring doctor will discuss this with you when obtaining your consent.

PLEASE BRING ANY PREVIOUS X-RAYS OR SCANS WITH YOU ON THE DAY OF YOUR EXAMINATION.

CONFIRM ANY PREPARATION REQUIRED WITH STAFF WHEN MAKING YOUR APPOINTMENT.

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# Your doctor may request to go filmless

**With the growing use of digital imaging, Pittwater Radiology is giving doctors the opportunity to not receive hard copy films and to replace them with electronic reports and images – in other words, go “filmless”.**

If your referring doctor elects to go “filmless,” once you have completed your medical imaging examination, you will no longer have to wait for x-ray films. The images will be sent electronically to your doctor’s computer together with a report from our Radiologist.

If you require films in the future, all films are stored digitally and can be requested at anytime with 24 hour notice.

FACET JOINT INJECTIONS ARE PERFORMED AT OUR DEE WHY, FRENCHS FOREST & MONA VALE CLINICS

## Pittwater Radiology clinics

### Dee Why

Unit 5, 800 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why 2099  
Ph: 9982 4911 | Fax: 9981 4457

### Mona Vale

1785 Pittwater Rd, Mona Vale 2103  
Ph: 9997 2844 | Fax: 9997 3507

### Frenchs Forest

24 Forest Way, Frenchs Forest 2086  
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[www.pittwaterradiology.com.au](http://www.pittwaterradiology.com.au)



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