

What is an arthrogram

An arthrogram is a special X-ray procedure where contrast dye is injected into your joint and X-ray pictures are then taken. You will then go to MRI for further scans.

A joint injection is an injection of local anaesthetic and/or steroid into the joint under X-ray guidance. Joint injections are usually done to treat inflammation and reduce pain or discomfort.

Risks and benefits

You will benefit from this procedure because it will help us investigate your symptoms and possibly treat them. It is a safe and quick procedure and it is done on an outpatient basis so will not require a hospital bed.

These are common procedures that have little risk. However, it is possible to have a small amount of bruising or minor bleeding into the joint. There is a small risk of an infection in the joint. Rarely the needle tip might cause damage to the cartilage in the joint. We will discuss all of the risks and benefits with you in detail before your procedure.

During the procedure

You will be brought into the X-ray room and you will be introduced to the team and your identity confirmed.

All females of child-bearing age need to sign consent to be X-rayed to confirm that there is no chance that you could be pregnant. We cannot proceed with the procedure if there is a chance of pregnancy.

The procedure will be explained to you by the radiologist. You will have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

You will then lie on a special X-ray table. The joint will be cleaned with antiseptic fluid and you will be covered with a sterile sheet. You will be given local anaesthetic to numb the skin. This stings initially and then the skin is goes numb.

The radiologist will insert a needle into your joint and inject X-ray contrast while taking X-rays.

The procedure usually takes 15 minutes but may take longer. Arthrogram patients will then be escorted to MRI for the next part of your procedure.

After the procedure

For a few hours afterwards, your joint may feel uncomfortable. Once the anaesthetic has worn off, you may experience some pain before things start to improve. Take usual pain relief like ibuprofen or paracetamol.

