

Biceps Tendon Sheath Injection

If you have pain on the front of your shoulder that is worse with over-head movement, you could have biceps tendonitis. If your pain doesn't resolve with rest, a steroid injection may be recommended.

An injection can help find the source of your pain and result in relief that could last hours, months or even permanently depending on the reason for your pain.

Risks and Benefits

There are many causes of shoulder pain, and most of them result in chronic inflammation. A long-acting steroid can calm the inflammation and decrease pain for several months at a time. Of course, this won't take away whatever is the cause of the irritation, but this gives your body time and space to heal.

The complication rate for bicep tendon injections is very low, but not zero. As with any procedure involving a needle, there is a rare chance of infection or bleeding at the injection site. There is also a chance that you will not experience any pain relief, or may need additional injections.

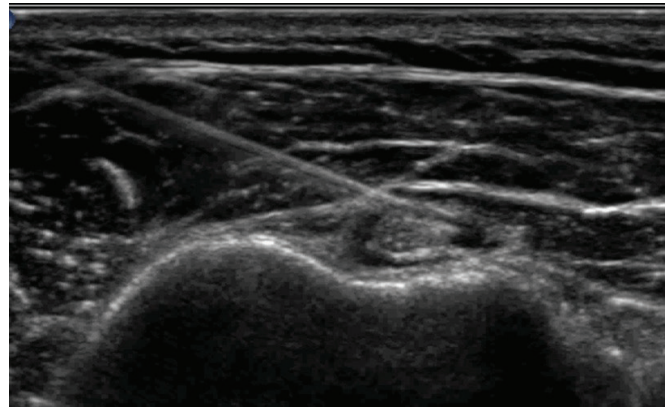
How You Should Prepare

Arrange to avoid strenuous activities the day of the procedure. You may wish to take the day off of work.

If you are on blood thinners, you will need to hold the medication prior to the procedure. Contact your healthcare provider before stopping any medication to determine if it is safe for you.

If you have an infection or if you are on antibiotics, the medication course must be complete prior to the procedure, to ensure that no infection remains.

On the day of the procedure, wear comfortable clothes without metal fasteners, including zippers, buttons, and snaps.



What Happens During the Procedure

Biceps Tendon Sheath injections at North Star Radiology are ultrasound-guided to ensure exact placement of the needle during the procedure. You will lie back, your shoulder will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution, and a local anesthetic will be used in the skin to numb the area.

A thin needle will be then be guided into the tendon sheath using real-time ultrasound. Next a combination of anesthetic (immediate relief) and steroid (long-term relief) will be injected. Some patients may feel a pressure sensation or discomfort during the injection.

The procedure itself will take about 20 minutes once it begins.

After the Procedure

Rest for the remainder of the day, and do not return to work until the next day if possible. You may resume your normal diet and prescribed medications (resume blood thinner medication tomorrow). Avoid heavy lifting or strenuous activity for 24 hours after the procedure.

You may feel soreness or tenderness at the needle insertion site or a temporary increase in pain as the anesthetic wears off and the steroid starts to take effect. You can use an ice pack to relieve discomfort, apply once every two hours for 20 minutes at a time. Do not apply any heat to the injection site for 72 hours following your procedure.

In some patients, a single injection will give permanent relief. In other patients, a series of injections may be beneficial.