Kenalog/Triamcinolone Injection for Rheumatology Patients

What is it?

Triamcinolone contains an active ingredient which is a type of medicine known as a Corticosteroid. Corticosteroids are hormones that are made naturally by the adrenal glands in the body.

Kenalog is a man-made (synthetic) steroid that has an anti-inflammatory effect. It is not the same type of steroid (anabolic) used by athletes. It is used to decrease inflammation in many diseases and conditions. It can also increase movement of the affected joints.

How is it used?

Kenalog can be injected either into the muscle (intramuscular) or joint (intra-articular).

An intramuscular injection can be given by nursing staff and usually into the buttocks. Most of the time it starts working quickly. Relief can vary and results are felt in about 48-72 hours.

It is absorbed slowly in the bloodstream from the buttock. For this reason, one injection can last for about 3 weeks. If given in a joint (intra-articular) it is given in the doctor’s office by a doctor under sterile technique.

What are the side effects?

Short term side effects can include:

- Increased blood pressure
- Increased appetite
- Mood changes
- Abdominal bloating
- Nausea
- Problems sleeping
- Increase in energy level
- Decreased potassium levels in blood
Side effects are very rare when injected into a joint. The main side effects when given in the joint are more pain and swelling. If that happens we suggest you put ice on the area. You may also feel flushed or dizzy.

Please call your health care provider if:
- Pain is severe or lasts more than 48 hours.
- Signs of infection such as redness or fever are present.
- Symptoms begin 48 hours after procedure.

Joint infection rarely occurs but talking with a health care provider can help answer questions.

**Important Phone Numbers**

Rheumatology UW Health East 608-265-1280
Rheumatology UW Health West 608-263-7577
Toll Free Number/After Hours 800-323-8942

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©4/2015. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7443.