

Barbotage Information for patients

Following assessment and discussion by your Physiotherapist at your recent appointment, 'barbotage' was mentioned to help in the management of your condition.

This information sheet is a reminder of the information that the Physiotherapist will have discussed with you.

Why do I need barbotage?

'Barbotage' is also known as 'percutaneous lavage' or 'image-guided needle irrigation and aspiration'. It is a technique applied to tendons which are affected by a condition called 'calcific tendinopathy'. In this condition calcific deposits are laid down in the tendons, particularly in the shoulder tendons.

Barbotage involves the introducing an injection needle into the calcific deposit to either remove the calcium or stimulate the body to reabsorb it.

How will the treatment be administered?

A needle will be inserted into the calcium deposit under the guidance of ultrasound to enable the clinician to accurately and safely see the needles' position. A small amount of local anaesthetic will also be administered to make it more comfortable. This procedure will last for five to ten minutes. You will be either seated or lying down, depending on which is more comfortable for you.

As per all injection treatments, you will be asked to remain in the building for 10 to 15 minutes afterwards to ensure there has been no reaction to the procedure.

Will it be painful?

You will be given a small amount of local anaesthetic to help with any pain both during and after the treatment. Immediately after the procedure a local anaesthetic and steroid will be injected into the adjacent area to help with any further pain and to reduce inflammation.

You may find that your pain improves quite quickly after the local anaesthetic but comes back later - it normally wears off between 30 minutes to two hours. If you require any further pain relief after this, you can use any pain relief already supplied by your GP or pharmacist.

How quickly will the treatment work?

This varies from person to person, but we would expect to see an improvement in the symptoms between three to six weeks.

How long will the benefits of the treatment last?

The current research suggests between 55 - 92% of patients have a good to excellent improvement in pain and function up to 6 months after treatment. Unfortunately there is no research on the long term effects.



Do I need to do anything after the injection?

- Please avoid heavy lifting for 48 hours; you will still be able to drive or write.
- Stop any exercises you do in the gym or provided by our Physiotherapist for one week.
- Make sure you have an appointment with your Physiotherapist two to three weeks after the treatment to review your symptoms and continue with rehabilitation. It is important to adhere to their advice and exercises to get the most benefit from the procedure.

Are there any side effects?

Barbotage is a safe and effective procedure but some minor complications may occur between 7 to 10 % of patients. They include:

- Bursitis – the research suggests that this is the most common adverse effect of the treatment. It may give you on going shoulder symptoms after the procedure but will generally improve with further treatment.
- Fainting or feeling faint during the procedure – the Physiotherapist will monitor your condition throughout your treatment. If this does occur we simply stop the procedure and make you more comfortable.
- Infection - Please contact your GP or Out of Hours Service if you think you have symptoms on or around the treatment area, such as pain, redness, swelling or pus, as you may require urgent antibiotic treatment.
- Facial flushing - This may occur 24 to 48 hours afterwards and usually lasts one to two days.
- Bleeding or bruising at the site of the treatment.
- Post injection flare - The pain usually subsides within a couple of days;
- Uterine bleeding - This might happen in ladies who have gone through the menopause. Please consult your GP via a routine appointment if this occurs;
- Altered blood sugar levels - Diabetic patients may observe an alteration in sugar levels that can last for up to one to two weeks. If you have diabetes you will be advised to monitor sugar levels for two weeks after the injection. If you have any concerns about your diabetic control please contact your GP;
- Thinning of the skin at the injection site - This is where the steroid contained in the injection can destroy the fat under the skin resulting in a visible indentation.
- Loss of skin pigmentation (colour) at the injection site – This tends to be more likely for those people with darker skin pigmentation.

Are there any alternative treatments?

Your Physiotherapist will have recommended barbotage of the tendon as the best treatment for you at the present time. However, if you decline this particular treatment they will discuss with you other available treatments.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact the Adult Physiotherapy Department to discuss this further with the Physiotherapist - 024 7696 1335.

If you require this document in a different format or language please contact the Trust's Equality and Diversity Team on 024 7653 6802

References: Ezio et al (2015) 'Ultrasound-guided percutaneous irrigation in rotator cuff calcific tendinopathy: what is the evidence?'; Gatt et al (2014) 'Ultrasound-Guided Barbotage for Calcific Tendonitis of the Shoulder: A Systematic Review'; Bazzocchi et al (2015) 'Ultrasound imaging-guided percutaneous treatment of rotator cuff calcific tendinitis'; Oudelaar et al (2016) 'Needle aspiration of calcific deposits (NACD) for calcific tendinitis is safe and effective'; Yi-Cheng et al (2017) 'Comparative Effectiveness of Nonoperative Treatments for Chronic Calcific Tendinitis of the Shoulder.'