

# Orthopaedic Connection

## More About Joint Injections

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***Transforming patient information into patient understanding.***

The lubricating, pain relieving injections I use to treat knee arthritis are also call "viscosupplementation". The injections cannot cure arthritis. Nothing can, actually.

### **How It Works**

In some mysterious way the injection substance helps your knee make more normal joint fluid lubrication. It does not stay in your knee indefinitely. It actually disappears fairly soon (days) and can no longer be found in the knee.

But then the knee joint lining perks up and starts to make much better lubrication on its own. No one really knows how.

### **Hyaluronic Acid By Mouth**

Some companies are selling oral Hyaluronic Acid supplements. The effectiveness has never been proven. I advise you to stay away from taking Hyaluronic Acid by mouth. You're wasting your money. *Please note: I am speaking only about this product. I am not downing supplements in general.*

### **Which Joints?**

Hyaluronic Acid has been approved only for the knee joint. It has been used in the hip, shoulder and ankle rarely, but with some success.

### **Which Patient Will Benefit?**

It is most effective for people with mild to moderate arthritis pain. Some persons who need a total knee replacement choose injections because of their age or medical conditions that preclude surgery.

### **Any Side Effects?**

They are rare. Occasionally a patient may have soreness at the injection site. Other than soreness I really haven't seen any side effects related to the injections. If you are allergic to chicken or eggs, it's best not to have it. Actually, most patients tolerate the injection very well.

### **I Use Supartz In My Office**

While there are several products available, Supartz is the one that has helped my patients the most. I have used all of them, but Supartz has been the most effective. I give it once a week for a total of five weeks.

For those patients *that it is going to help*, it lasts 6 - 12 months and in some cases much longer. It's hard to predict how long it will help. I have (knock on wood!) not made anyone worse by injecting it. Either it helps or you stay the same.

### **What Else?**

I often use Supartz in conjunction with oral medication. Weight loss, exercise if possible, physical therapy and various medications are frequently used at the same time.