

Excuse me. Did you say Supartz? What's that?

I'm glad you asked me that question as the saying goes. I'll do my best to explain without getting too technical, which is always my aim in "talking" to you. I've learned that long ago in talking to patients in the office. Here, I don't want to lose you or you may go away and stop learning!

Ah, Supartz is ----, shall we say a pain relieving lubrication fluid that is injected into the knee joint for arthritis. It is the one that I have used because I feel it is the best one for my patients. There are several others that I have also tried, but Supartz has helped my patients more than the rest.

What is it you ask? Well, are you ready ---- it is made from rooster combs. Yep. A substance known as hyaluronic acid is present in many animal tissues, but especially in rooster combs. It is practically the same substance that is so important in lubricating our joints.

Arthritis in a joint doesn't let the joint make very good lubrication substance, which is one of many reasons why an arthritic knee hurts. Not the only reason though.

Supartz, which is pretty thick doesn't sit in the knee like goo. It causes the knee to make its own more normal lubrication, relieving pain as it does.

How exactly does it do that? I was afraid somebody was going to ask. Answer: no one knows for sure. There are good theories too complicated to include here.

It is not for everybody whose knee hurts and who thinks they have "arthritis". That can only be determined by a careful history, exam and plain x-rays done standing. For the most part Orthopaedic Surgeons are in the best position to decide if it will help a particular person.

Because there are so many degrees of arthritis, Supartz doesn't help everyone, but I find it does help most. It can help for 6 - 12 months or indefinitely in a few patients.

We give it in a series of 5 injections once a week. Does it hurt? Not really, because we give a local anesthetic shot to numb the knee first, wait 10 minutes and then do the injection of Supartz. Everyone doesn't do it that way, but I know it is the best and the most comfortable way.

I like to think of Supartz as a kind of bridge between arthroscopic knee surgery and a total knee replacement.

There is a lot more information about Supartz on my Web site, [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com). I encourage you to check it out.

Doc, if it helps can I have it again?

Yes. But Medicare and insurance companies generally will allow us to do it no sooner than 6 months.

Doc, I have "arthritis" in my shoulder. Can I have Supartz in my shoulder?

We've run out of time this week, but I can see there is more to cover here. Check it out next week.

Knee problems requiring Supartz injections or any other Orthopaedic Surgery condition can be evaluated by Dr. Haverbush at the Lakeview Community Wellness Center.

Future clinic dates are Friday May 2, May 16, May 30, 2008.

Please call 989-463-6092 to schedule an appointment. Be well.

Dr. Haverbush