
**THE CENTER FOR PAIN MEDICINE
MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL**

PIRIFORMIS INJECTION

Information Sheet for Patients

What is a piriformis injection? The piriformis muscle is one of the muscles deep in the buttocks that rotates the leg outwards. The sciatic nerve runs very close to this muscle. If the muscles become tight it can put pressure on the sciatic nerve causing pain in the buttock and radiating down the leg. The injection involves depositing a small amount of local anesthetic (numbing medication) and steroid (anti-inflammatory) into the muscle to relieve the pain.

What is the goal of piriformis injection? The goal is to provide pain relief so that you are able to resume normal activities. In many cases, we will prescribe a course of physical therapy to help you return to a normal level of activity.

What happens before a treatment? You will be escorted to a procedure room where a nurse will conduct a pre-procedure interview. The pain specialist who will be performing the injection will review your medical history, previous image studies, physical exam and current medications.

What happens during the procedure? The patient remains awake during the entire process. Blood pressure, heart rate and breathing are continually monitored. Lying face down on the procedure table the injection site is cleansed with an antiseptic. This procedure involves inserting a needle through the skin, muscle and soft tissues, so there is some slight discomfort involved. An injection of local anesthetic (numbing medication) will be administered in the area where you are experiencing pain. The physician then directs a needle through the skin with the use of x-ray guidance and deposits the medication into or near the piriformis muscle. This procedure takes approximately 30 minutes.

