

**Patient  
Information**

# Local steroid injections

## Introduction

This leaflet explains about local steroid injections and their use, including the possible side effects.

Local steroid injections have been suggested for you because they are considered an important part of the treatment for many types of hair and scalp disorders. These include alopecia areata, frontal fibrosing alopecia, folliculitis decalvans and lichen planopilaris.

## What are steroid injections and how do they work?

This medication is currently prescribed off label. This means that it is being used for a condition it was not previously meant to treat.

This treatment has only been prescribed by the consultant after careful consideration of other treatment options.

Steroids are anti-inflammatory medications that help reduce redness, swelling and discomfort. They also promote hair growth in alopecia areata.

## How many injections are given?

From 2 to 10 injections may be given depending on the size of the area that is being treated. For example, a small quarter-sized area of alopecia areata may be treated with 4 injections and a full eyebrow may be treated with 5 to 6 injections.

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Department

**Dermatology**

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## Possible side effects from local steroid injections

The most common side effect is some discomfort at the time the medication is injected. This tends to last for about 3 to 4 seconds.

- Small indentations (hollows) to the injected areas are rare, but can happen (this is often temporary)
- Slight risk of infection at the site of injection
- Slight risk of the blood vessels at the site of the injection reddening and being more noticeable
- Headaches for a day or two

Other side effects may be possible but many patients have steroid injections without experiencing any.

If you develop any side effects after having a steroid injection, please contact Dr Takwale's secretary. The contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

## Important points to remember

Steroid injections must not be used during pregnancy or when breast feeding because there is no research to suggest it is safe to do so.

## Contact information

### Dr Takwale's Secretary

Tel: 0300 422 5397

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 3:00pm

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## Making a choice

### Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



### Ask 3 Questions

**To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.**

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation

\* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>