

## Facet Joint Injections

### Overview

The facet joints are found at the back of spinal vertebrae and can become painfully irritated or inflamed. An injection can relieve inflammation and pain, helping doctors diagnosis the pain's source.

### Skin Numbed

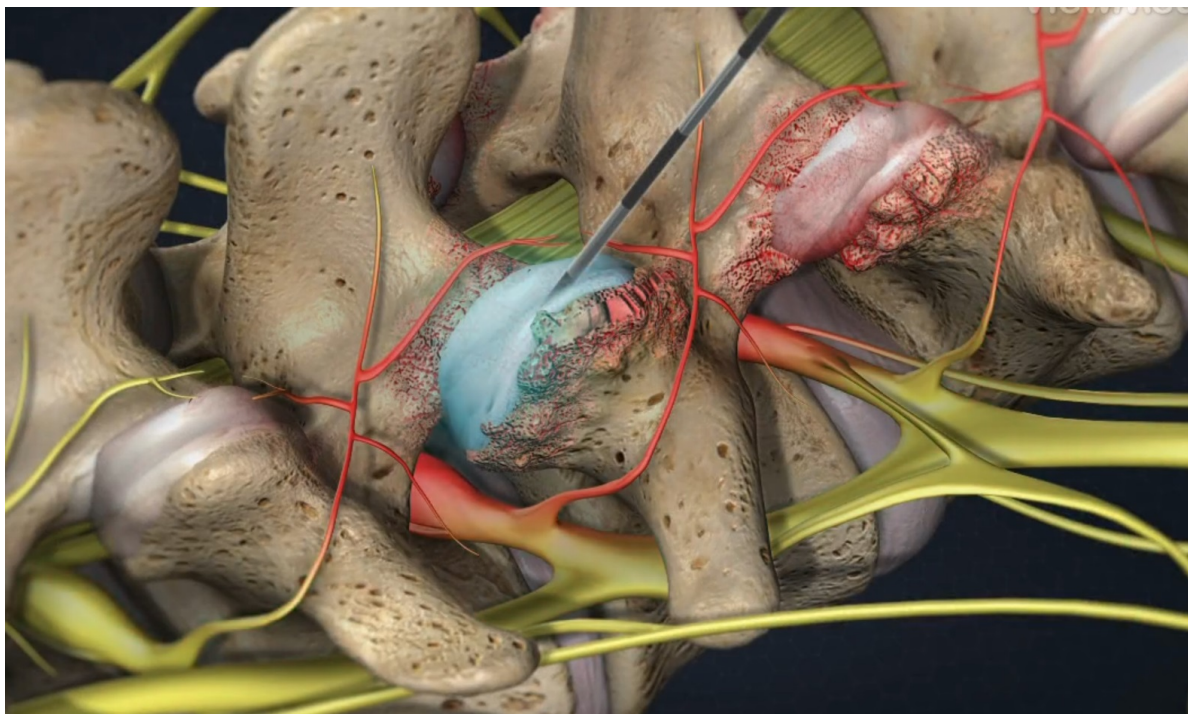
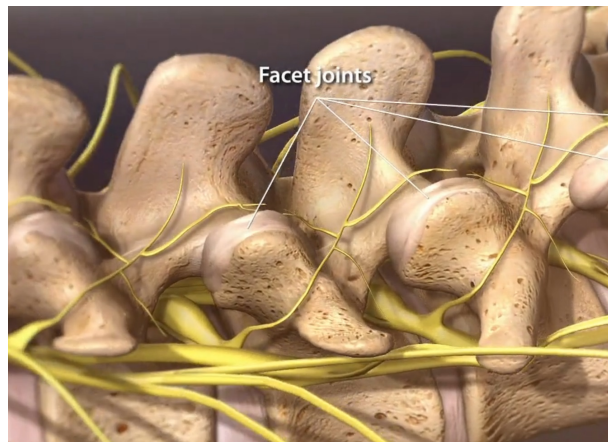
In preparation for the procedure, the physician injects local anesthetic to numb tissue from the skin down to the facet joint.

### Placement Confirmed

With the aid of a video x-ray device called a fluoroscope, the physician guides a needle through the numbed tissue and into the facet joint. Contrast dye is used to confirm the needle's placement.

### Medication Injected

Once the needle is positioned, the physician injects a soothing mixture of numbing anesthetic and anti-inflammatory steroid medication. A reduction of pain suggests that the facet joint was the pain source.



### End of Procedure

Back or neck pain may disappear immediately after a successful injection. As the anesthetic wears off, pain may return. The steroid will begin to take effect in the days after the injection, reducing inflammation and pain. The injection may provide pain relief for several days to several months. Your doctor is allowed to give you a total of three facet joint injections per year per facet joint.