

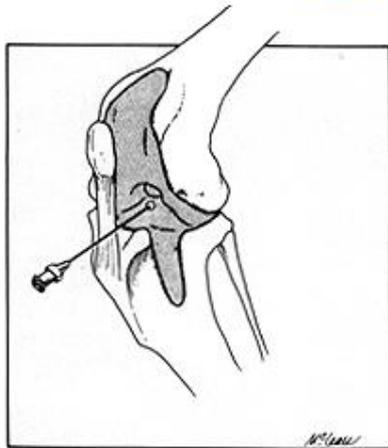
Hyaluronic Acid

A natural treatment for arthritic joints

What is Hyaluronic Acid and what does it do?

Hyaluronic acid (HA) is an important component of joint fluid and cartilage and it can be injected in the form of a gel to provide a minimally invasive and drug free means of directly improving the function of damaged or arthritic joints. Hyaluronic acid provides cartilage with many of its shock absorbing properties and increases the lubricant qualities of the joint fluid (known as 'synovial fluid').

In damaged or arthritic joints, the amount and quality of HA decreases and this significantly increases the amount of stiffness and pain. By injecting HA gel directly into the joint, levels of HA are increased providing increased lubrication (known as 'viscosupplementation') and reducing pain associated with joint movement. The hyaluronic acid also coats damaged areas of cartilage and provides nutrition to these areas to help the body repair the affected tissues. In simple terms, injecting HA into a joint is a bit like spraying WD-40 into a rusty hinge!



How long does it last?

A single injection of Hyaluronic acid is often sufficient to provide lasting relief of symptoms - varying from 3-6 months and even longer in some cases. The injections may be repeated as often as required to maintain the effect - even every month or two if necessary.

In some severe cases, we may recommend giving a course of several injections i.e. one injection every two weeks on three occasions.

Can Hyaluronic Acid be used alongside other treatments?

HA can be used on its own or in conjunction with other regenerative treatments such as stem cells (MSCs), Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP), Pentosan Polysulphate (PP – ‘Cartrophen’) and K-laser therapy. Using regenerative techniques alongside one another will invariably lead to an enhanced response as they complement the effects of each other in stimulating the repair and recovery of damaged tissues.

HA can also safely be used alongside more conventional anti-inflammatories and pain-killers as well.

Are there any side effects?

As HA is a naturally occurring joint substance, there should not be any side effects at all. With any injection into a joint there is always a small risk of infection entering through the needle hole but this is rare.

How is HA gel administered?

HA gel is injected directly into the joint under a light anaesthetic or deep sedation. With modern techniques there is very little risk associated with this.

What is the recovery period following the injections?

After a typical implantation into an arthritic joint, we normally advise two days of rest at home followed by two weeks of gentle lead walking. It is important that you keep your pet out of water and any dirty environments for the first 7 days after the injection to reduce the risk of introducing infection. For this reason it would be worth washing or changing your pets bedding before they return home from the procedure.

The injection sites themselves seldom require any attention but if they appear red or sore then carefully clean the area with damp cotton wool before applying an antiseptic cream eg Savlon.

What is the typical cost of treatment?

HA gel injections start at £200-250 including sedation/GA as required - please ask us for more information.

