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a better way to care

Sacroiliac Joint Pain Journey



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a video explaining
your Sacroiliac Joint
Pain Journey



Your Journey with SI Joint Pain

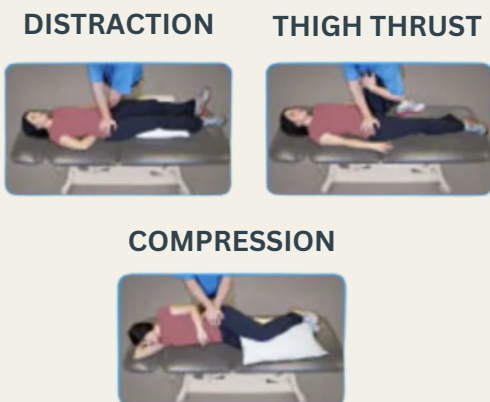
Your SI (sacroiliac) joint connects your spine to your pelvis and supports your upper body. When it gets inflamed or irritated—due to arthritis, injury, pregnancy, or uneven stress—it can cause:

- Pain in your lower back, buttocks, hips, or legs.
- Stiffness or trouble moving, especially when walking, standing, or climbing stairs.
- Increased pain after sitting too long or certain movements.

Step 1: Initial Evaluation

To figure out if your SI joint is the issue, we'll start with:

- A physical exam and special tests (like the ones seen in the photo below)
- Pressing on certain areas to locate your pain



If SI joint problems are suspected, we'll begin with non-surgical treatments.

Step 2: Conservative Therapy (6 Months)

What it includes: Physical therapy, medication, or a support brace.

Goal: Reduce pain and improve movement.

Next step: If your pain isn't at least 50% better after six months, we'll consider an injection.

Step 3: SI Joint Injection

A minimally invasive procedure that can:

- Confirm the SI joint as the pain source.
- Provide temporary relief.

How it works:

- You'll lie face down, and the area will be numbed.
- Using X-ray guidance, a thin needle injects a mix of numbing and anti-inflammatory medication.

Follow-up (2–4 weeks):

- If you feel over 50% better, a second injection may be planned.
- If it's not effective, other options like Peripheral Nerve Stimulation (PNS) will be considered.

Step 4: Second SI Joint Injection

This confirms if injections are helping and provides more relief.

Follow-up (1 month):

- If relief continues, we may discuss SI Joint fusion surgery for a long-term solution.

SI Joint Fusion Surgery

What it does:

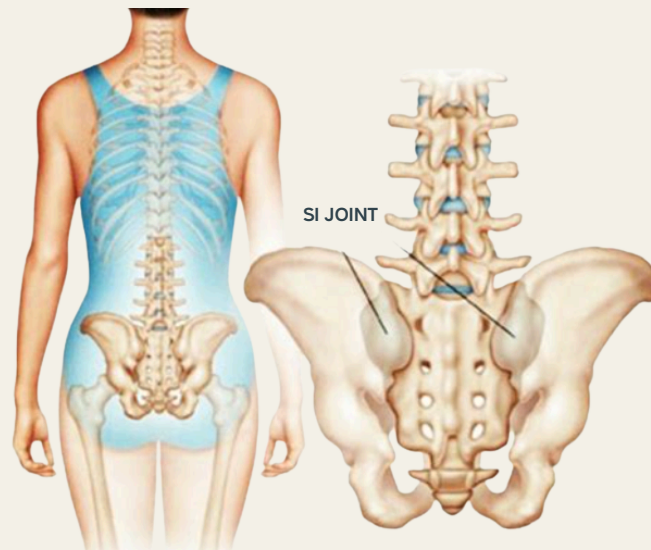
- Permanently joins the SI joint to stop painful movement and stabilize the pelvis.
- Helps relieve pain caused by joint instability or inflammation.

Procedure:

- The surgeon makes a small incision, removes damaged joint tissue, and inserts implants (such as screws or bone grafts) to hold the joint in place.

Recovery:

- Patients go home the same day.
- Light activities can be resumed in a few days, with full recovery taking weeks to months.
- Physical therapy may be needed to rebuild strength and improve movement.



Your Treatment Path at a Glance

Diagnosis: Tests and injections confirm the SI joint as the pain source.

Non-Surgical Options: Physical therapy, medication, and injections.

Surgery: If needed, spinal fusion offers long-term stability.

Goals of Treatment

For SI Joint Injections:

- Pinpoint the pain source.
- Provide relief and guide next steps.

For SI Joint Fusion:

- Permanently stabilize the joint.
- Reduce pain and improve daily life.

SI Joint Pain FAQs

What happens at my first appointment?

- Your doctor will do a physical exam.
- Perform tests to check if your SI joint is causing pain.
- Press on certain areas to pinpoint discomfort.

How is SI joint pain diagnosed?

- Pain is in the SI joint area.
- At least three specific tests come back positive.

How long will my first exam take?

Your initial visit, including tests and palpation, usually takes 15–30 minutes.

What determines my next steps?

- SI joint confirmed: Start with 6 months of therapy.
- If therapy doesn't help (less than 50% relief): Try injections.
- Injection works: Get a second one.
- Injection doesn't work: Consider PNS or surgery.

How should I prepare?

- For injections: Wear loose clothes and bring someone to drive you home.
- For surgery: Follow fasting instructions and plan for recovery help.

What are the risks?

- Injection risks: Temporary soreness, bruising, or rare infection.
- Surgery risks: Infection, nerve damage, or failure to fuse properly.

How long do the procedures take?

- SI Joint Injection: 30–60 minutes.
- SI Joint Fusion Surgery: 1–2 hours.

Do you use anesthesia?

- For injections: Local anesthesia.
- For surgery: General anesthesia.

When will I feel better?

- After an injection: Immediate relief from numbing medicine; steroids take a few days to work.
- After surgery: Full relief may take weeks to months.

Will the procedure hurt?

- Injection: You might feel a little discomfort, but numbing medicine helps.
- Surgery: You'll have pain meds after the procedure to keep you comfortable.

What if I don't get treatment?

Ignoring SI joint pain can lead to chronic pain and stiffness, problems in other areas, like hips or lower back, and/or difficulty with everyday activities.

When can I get back to normal activities?

- After injections: Light activities the same day; avoid heavy lifting for 1–2 days.
- After surgery: Recovery takes 6–12 weeks or longer, depending on how you heal.

How will I know if the procedure worked?

- For injections: Pain relief of 50% or more means it's working.
- For surgery: Less pain and better mobility over time.

Will I have follow-up appointments?

You'll likely have more visits after injections or surgery to track progress.

What happens at follow-ups?

Your doctor will check your pain and movement and decide if more treatment is needed. New diagnoses aren't common unless new symptoms appear.

SI Joint Pain FAQs

Understanding Pain and Sedation During Your Procedure

Everyone experiences pain and sedation differently, and your comfort level during the procedure can depend on several factors, including your body's response to anesthesia. For example, individuals who regularly consume alcohol or those living with chronic pain may require adjustments to achieve the right level of sedation.

Our goal is to ensure you are as comfortable as possible while keeping your safety our top priority. While we aim to provide effective pain relief, it's important to recognize that over-sedation carries certain risks, which our medical team carefully monitors and manages.

