

Hyaluronic Acid (HA) Knee Injections

Also called “gel shots” or viscosupplementation

Hyaluronic acid is a natural substance in healthy joint fluid. It makes the fluid thick and slippery so your knee moves smoothly. In knee arthritis, this fluid becomes thinner. An HA injection adds a gel version of this substance to your knee to help cushion the joint and ease pain.

Who is it for?

- People with **knee arthritis** whose pain has not improved enough with exercise, physical therapy, weight loss, or pain relievers like Tylenol or Advil
- People who didn't get enough relief from cortisone (steroid) shots, or who want to avoid frequent steroid shots
- People who are not ready for, or can't have, knee replacement surgery

HA injections are FDA-approved for the knee. They work best for mild to moderate arthritis.

How well does it work?

Results vary from person to person. Some people get several months of meaningful pain relief, and others notice little change. HA does not rebuild cartilage or reverse arthritis — the goal is to reduce pain and help you stay active. If an injection helped you before, it can usually be repeated.

Types of HA injections

There are many brands. They all work in a similar way — the main difference is how many shots you need. **We most often use Synvisc-One**, a single injection.

1 injection

Synvisc-One, Monovisc, Durolane, Gel-One

3 injections 1 week apart

Euflexxa, Synvisc, Gelsyn-3, Orthovisc, TriVisc

3–5 injections 1 week apart

Supartz FX, Hyalgan, GenVisc 850

Your insurance plan may decide which brand we can use. **Tell us if you are allergic to eggs, feathers, or poultry** — some brands, including Synvisc-One, are made from rooster combs, and non-animal brands are available.

What to expect



Side effects

The most common side effects are mild and short-lived: **knee pain, stiffness, or swelling** for a day or two. Ice for 20 minutes at a time can help. Serious problems, such as infection or a severe allergic reaction, are rare.

Call our office at (425) 656-5060 if you have a fever, or if your knee becomes very swollen, red, hot, or painful after the injection.

Will insurance cover it?

Medicare usually covers HA injections for knee arthritis, generally no more than once every 6 months. A repeat injection is usually covered only if the last one helped.

Private insurance varies. Some plans no longer cover HA injections. Our office will check your benefits before scheduling and let you know about any out-of-pocket cost.