

Sacroiliac Joint Injection

What are the sacroiliac joints?

The sacroiliac joints (SI) are paired structures (on the right and left) that connect the spine to the pelvis and allow for motion. The SI joint, like other joints in the body, is surrounded by a capsule that contains lubricating fluid. SI joint motion allows us to walk upright, to lift, and to carry. Occasionally, the SI joint motion unit can become dysfunctional (for a variety of reasons), causing pain.

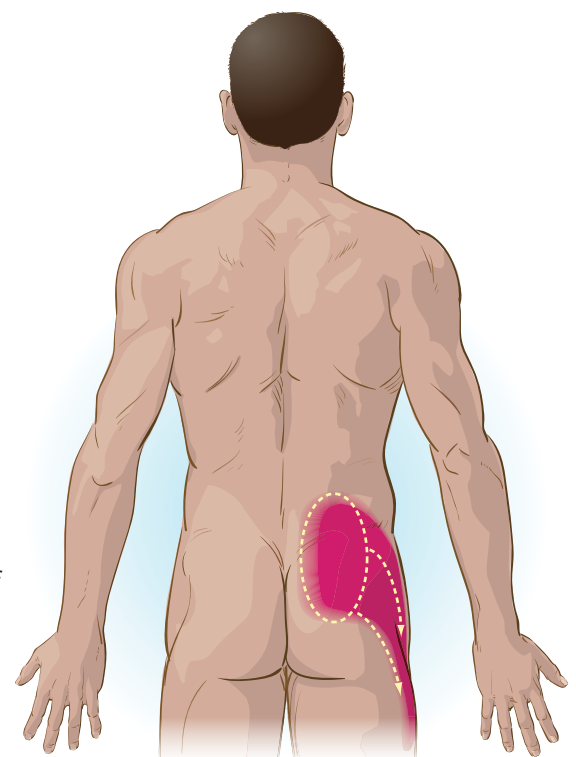
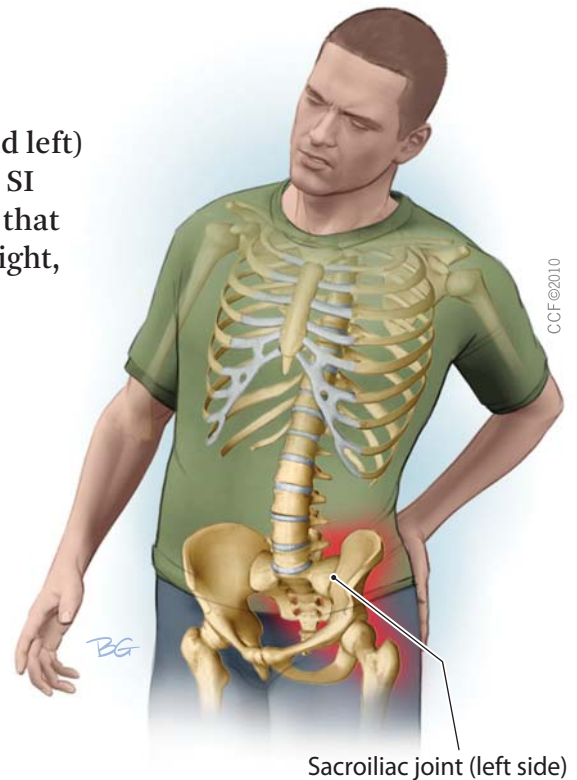
What is a Sacroiliac Joint injection?

A sacroiliac joint injection (SIJI) is a shot of an anti-inflammatory medication and an anesthetic into the joint capsule of the SI joint to treat the pain in your low back, buttock, or upper leg. (The figure to the right shows common locations of SI joint pain). The goal of this injection is to improve your spine motion as well as provide pain relief.

Before the procedure

You will meet with a doctor trained in spine intervention who will explain the procedure in detail. The physician will explain the risks and benefits of the procedure in detail, including possible complications or side effects. The potential side effects include, but are not limited to:

- Bleeding
- Infection
- Temporary increase in pain



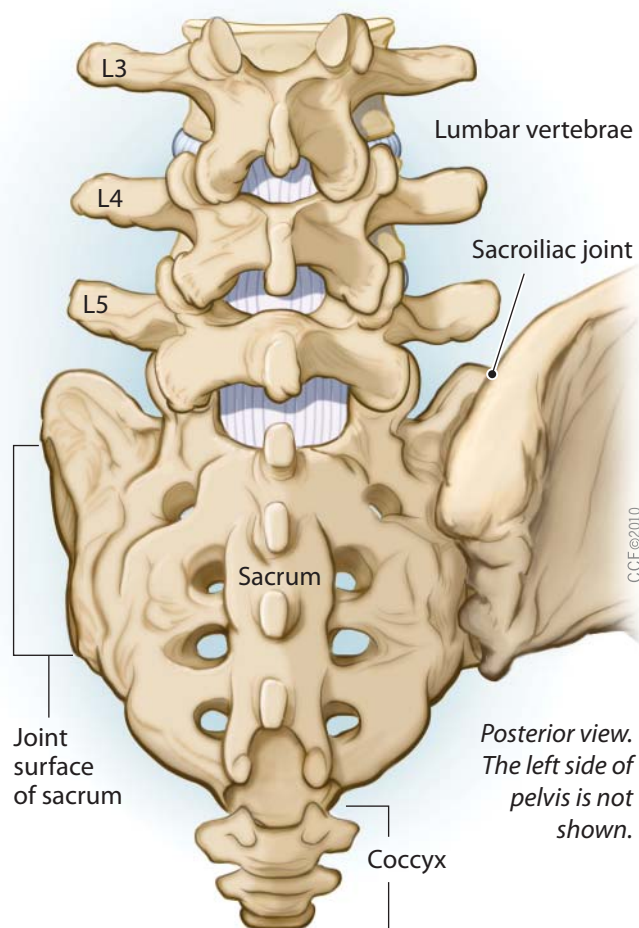
Common locations of sacroiliac joint pain (courtesy Fortin)

Two weeks before the procedure:

- Let us know if you have bleeding disorders, or if you are using blood thinners like aspirin, Coumadin® (warfarin), Plavix® (clopidogrel), Ticlid® (ticlopidine), heparin, Lovenox® (enoxaparin), Fragmin® (dalteparin), Aggrenox® (dipyridamole), or any herbal blood-thinning medications. The above listed medications may increase risk of bleeding complications.
- If you are taking a blood thinner, please call your primary care physician or cardiologist and ask if it is safe to stop the medication. They will instruct you on how to stop it when it is time for your injection. This will decrease the likelihood of bleeding complications.
- Please honestly review your all your medications with us prior to your SIJI. Please inform our staff about any medication changes.
- Please let us know if you have had any recent events (even 4 weeks prior to the procedure), such as hospitalization, fever, antibiotic treatment, or any illnesses.

The day of the procedure

- You will be fully awake during the procedure. Sedation is occasionally used. Discuss with your physician or staff when scheduling the procedure.
- If you have diabetes, your blood sugar numbers may increase. Your primary care physician or our staff will counsel you regarding management. Bring your diabetes medication with you so that you can take it after the procedure.
- Continue to take all medications, **ESPECIALLY BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICATIONS**. Bring all of your medications with you so that you can take them as needed after the injection. Please note: your blood sugar and blood pressure will need to be within a safe range on the day of the procedure.
- Please bring a responsible adult driver with you to your appointment. You should not drive or operate machinery for at least 24 hours after the procedure.



Sacroiliac joint (posterior view)

During the procedure

- The procedure usually takes 10 to 30 minutes.
- You will be lying down during the procedure.

After the procedure

- Pain relief may begin immediately after the medication has been injected. You may experience a brief recurrence of your former pain until the anti-inflammatory medication takes effect. Apply ice to the injection area to decrease discomfort.
- A bandage may be placed over the injection site.
- You will rest, lying down, in a recovery room for 15 to 30 minutes.
- A nurse will check your blood pressure and pulse and explain your discharge instructions to you.
- A responsible adult should drive you home.

Discharge instructions

- Do not drive or operate machinery for at least 24 hours after the procedure.
- You may eat your normal diet.
- Do not participate in any strenuous activity that day.
- You may remove any bandages the morning following the procedure.
- You may take a shower. Do not take a bath or sit in a hot tub for 24 hours.
- If you are taking a blood thinner like aspirin, Plavix, Ticlid, Coumadin, heparin, Lovenox, among others, you may restart it.

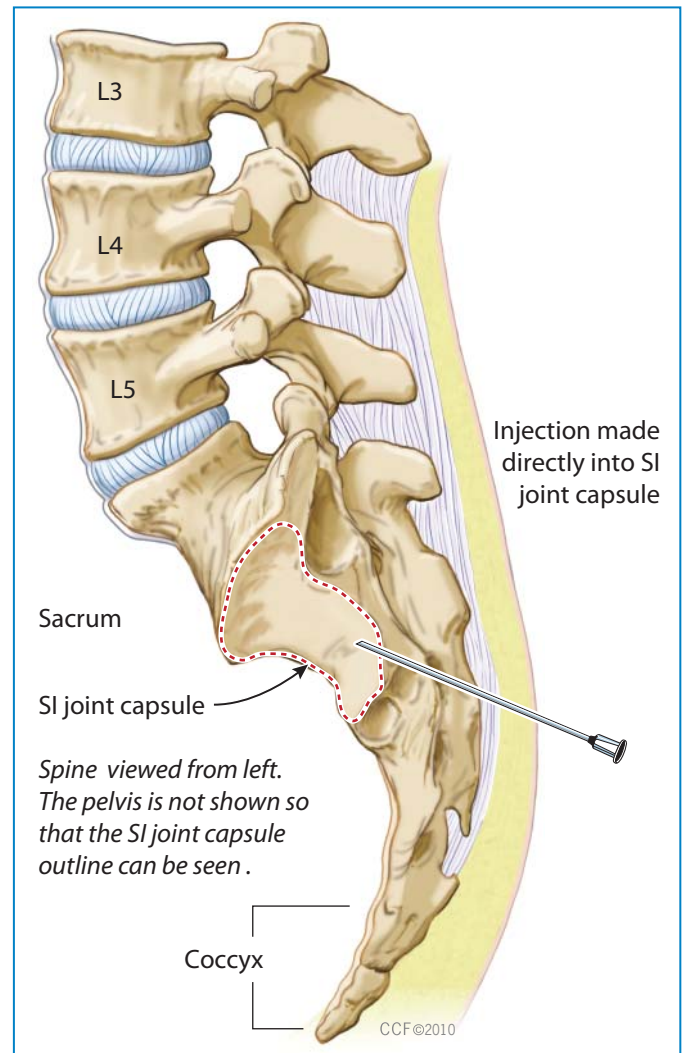


Diagram of sacroiliac joint injection (side view)

Locations and to schedule sacroiliac joint injections:

- ***Lutheran Hospital: 216.363.2311, Option 1***
- ***Main Campus: 216.445.9744***
- ***Medina Hospital: 330.721.5879***
- ***RE Jacobs Health Center Spine Institute: 440.695.4000***
- ***Twinsburg Family Health and Surgical Center: 330.888.4000***

When should I call for help?

If you develop a fever, chills, increasing pain, or if you have new symptoms, please call your physician's office directly. After hours, please call the Cleveland Clinic operator (216.444.2200) and request to speak to the Medical Spine Fellow on call.

This information is not intended to replace the medical advice of your doctor or health care provider. Please consult your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition.



Center for Spine Health
9500 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44195
216.636.5860 or 866.588.2264
clevelandclinic.org/spine