



Arthrosamid® Injections

What is an arthrosamid® injection?

Arthrosamid® is an injectable polyacrylamide hydrogel (iPAAG) that is primarily used to treat knee osteoarthritis (OA). It is an artificial hydrogel that is considered a *medical device* as it is non-degradable. When injected into the knee, it can provide long lasting pain relief for up to 5 years. Arthrosamid® can help improve the elasticity and cushioning of the tissue lining of the knee joint. This helps reduce knee pain and improves knee function and quality of life.

Why get an arthrosamid® injection?

- Non-surgical treatments for OA are recommended prior to surgery.
- Arthrosamid® is a relatively new treatment approved by Health Canada for the treatment of knee OA when more aggressive surgical options are not yet recommended.
- Studies suggest that arthrosamid® can result in longer symptom relief compared to other injections.

What to know before considering an arthrosamid® injection

- **Cost information:** The injection costs significantly more than any current injections as it is a highly specialized medical device.
- **Newer treatment:** Arthrosamid® is a relatively new treatment. Early studies show promise, but there is still some uncertainty about how well it works compared to other treatments, which patients benefit most, and how long benefits last.
- **Expected symptom relief:** Most patients typically experience gradual symptom improvement within 6 to 12 weeks after the injection.
- **Blood thinners:** Discuss with your doctor if you are taking any blood thinners (e.g. aspirin, anticoagulants), as it may be recommended to avoid them or lower the dose if possible.
- **Allergies:** Inform your doctor of any allergies. Allergic reactions are rare but can occur.
- **Infection:** Do not get an injection if you have an active skin disease, infection at or near the injection site, or if the knee joint is infected or severely inflamed.
- **Pregnancy:** Arthrosamid® injections are not recommended for women that are pregnant or breastfeeding.

What to expect at an arthrosamid® injection appointment

First appointment (consultation)

- Discuss the injection and your goals with your physician to ensure you are a candidate for the injection.
- Get an antibiotic prescription to take before the injection to reduce the risk of joint infections.
- Pay the deposit and sign consent forms.

Second appointment (administering the injection)

- On the day of your appointment, you must consume the prescribed antibiotics **one to two hours** before the injection. Please wear comfortable clothing (e.g. shorts), that allows easy access to the injection site. Plan to arrive about 10 minutes early to complete the check-in process. You may eat and drink as usual prior to your scheduled appointment. This appointment should take approximately 20 – 30 minutes.

- This procedure will be conducted in a treatment room and skin around the injection site will be cleaned with antiseptic solution. A local anesthetic will be injected with a fine needle which may sting initially before the skin goes numb.
- The injection will be performed with ultrasound guidance to ensure accurate placement of the injection.
- A small dressing will be placed over the injection site and can be removed the evening or following morning after treatment.

Third appointment (follow-up)

- 3-month check-in post injection to see how you're doing!

Post injection care & expectations

It is normal to experience temporary pain, swelling, and stiffness around the injected area for a few days after the injection. Post-injection care should include:

- **Rest:** Immediately after the injection, you will be asked to rest for 20 to 30 minutes in the clinic. Avoid strenuous activity (e.g. running, skiing, hiking, long walks) for several days after your injection. Your doctor will tell you how to gradually increase your activity.
- **Avoid driving:** On the day of the injection, avoid driving after.
- **Ice:** Ice wrapped in a towel (do not apply directly to skin) can be applied to the injected area for 15-20 minutes 2-3 times a day for the first 24-48 hours to help with the initial swelling, pain, and stiffness.
- **Over the counter medication:** Use over-the-counter medication like Acetaminophen (Tylenol[®]), acetylsalicylic acid (Aspirin) or ibuprofen (Advil) to manage pain and inflammation.
- **Avoid hot tubs or pools:** Do not soak the injected knee in hot tubs, pools, or baths for 48 hours to reduce the risk of infection.

What about additional injections?

- Arthrosamid[®] degrades very slowly and remains in the joint for up to 5 years. Repeat injections may be advised after 3 to 5 years.
- You cannot receive another injection (e.g. hyaluronic acid, cortisone) for at least 3 months after receiving an arthrosamid[®] injection. However, it is unlikely that these will be necessary.

Risks of arthrosamid[®] injections

Lack of improvement in symptoms

- It is possible that even after the injection there will be little to no improvement with symptoms as the injection's impact may vary depending on the person. It is also possible that it may provide only temporary improvement.

Pain or swelling

- Expect mild to moderate discomfort, pain, or swelling around the injection site during the few weeks following the injection.

Allergic reaction

- Although extremely rare, some individuals may experience a reaction to the local anesthetic. Symptoms range from rash, itching, and hives to more severe cases like difficulty breathing or swallowing.
- If you experience severe allergy symptoms, seek immediate medical attention.

Infection

- The risk of infection is extremely low. However, if it does occur it is very serious. Symptoms include extreme pain, swelling that does not go away, fever, or difficulty moving your joint.
- If you experience symptoms of an infection, seek immediate medical attention.

Bleeding or bruising

- Minor bleeding or bruising may be experienced at the injection site. Risk may be higher if you have a bleeding disorder or are taking blood-thinning medications.

If symptoms persist, or you are experiencing intense pain, a fever, chills, swelling getting progressively worse, or if you notice a significant change in your well-being, please seek immediate medical attention.