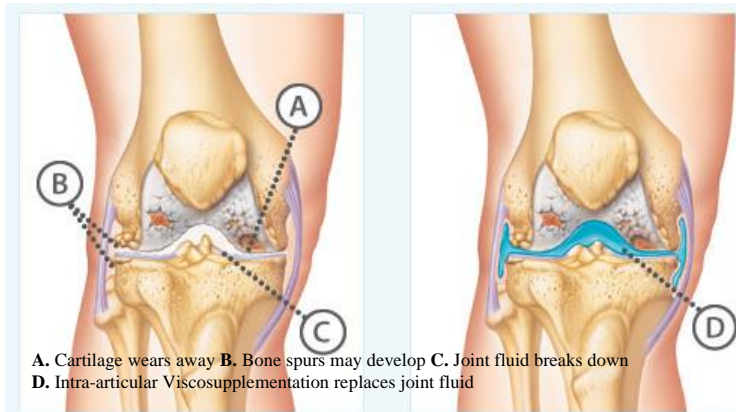




Viscosupplementation

What is it?

Viscosupplementation (aka “visco”) is a procedure in which a thick, gel-like substance is injected, typically into a joint (intra-articular). These substances, known as hyaluronates (hyaluronic acid and hylan), improve the lubricating properties of the natural fluid in the joint (synovial fluid), reduce joint pain, improve mobility, and provide a higher and more comfortable level of activity. It is synthetic joint fluid, so it is almost like an “oil change for the joint.”



A. Cartilage wears away B. Bone spurs may develop C. Joint fluid breaks down
D. Intra-articular Viscosupplementation replaces joint fluid

How does it work?

- Reduces inflammation by blocking arachidonic acid pathway
- Reduces pain by blocking Substance P
- Lubricates the joint/tissue

What is it used for?

- Osteoarthritis
- Tendinosis/tendinitis
- Ligament tears/instability

How is it performed?

Ultrasound (US) is used to identify the structure to be injected. The area is sterilized and anesthetized and then the fluid is injected under US guidance to ensure it is placed directly into the target space.

What do I do after the procedure?

Some patients feel instant relief, but some it takes 1-2 days to take its full effect. No excessive weight-bearing physical activity should take place for 1-2 days following the injection.

What are the possible risks?

The greatest risk is that it does not work for you. There is a small subset of patients who will not get a complete response to visco. Anytime we poke the skin there is a small risk of infection and bleeding but these are rare complications. No long-term side effects have been reported. Inform your physician if you are allergic to eggs or feathers.

How often should this procedure be done?

This procedure can be safely performed repeatedly, but it is the expectation that you will be getting at least 6 months of relief from the procedure. Viscosupplementation will not cure osteoarthritis, but it can stabilize it.

