



What is Synvisc?

Synvisc is a naturally derived shock-absorbing and lubricating material. When injected into the knee joint, it replaces the diseased synovial fluid with a material that is similar to young, healthy synovial fluid. For six months or more, Synvisc can decrease or eliminate pain in the knee, reduce stiffness and restore mobility – all of which may help you to return to a more active lifestyle.

How Synvisc works

Synvisc is made from hylans, which come from a substance called hyaluronan – the main ingredient of healthy synovial fluid that makes it thick and elastic. Hyaluronan occurs naturally in the tissues of your body, including in the synovial fluid and the tissues of the knee.

Hyaluronan is diminished or altered in the synovial fluid of a knee joint affected by osteoarthritis. Synvisc supplements or replaces the fluid giving it an elasticity and viscosity similar to that in a healthy knee. It works as a shock absorber and lubricant in the knee.

Synvisc is injected directly into the knee joint, a process known as 'viscosupplementation'.

Is Synvisc a cure for osteoarthritis?

No. Although Synvisc is a highly effective treatment, it is not a cure. Laboratory tests show that Synvisc may help protect cartilage cells and thereby potentially slow the progression of osteoarthritis.

Safety advantages of Synvisc

Yes. To date over 500,000 injections of Synvisc have been given without serious side effects being reported.

Synvisc is made from naturally derived hyaluronan, a major component of synovial fluid, and contains no drugs of any kind. It acts physically in the knee joint rather than chemically in the whole body. Therefore, Synvisc is not expected to have the range of side effects that are commonly associated with conventional oral drug treatments. A small percentage of patients experience some local discomfort, or pain and swelling. This soon passes and does not necessarily interfere with the treatment. More importantly, Synvisc is free of the potentially serious side effects of some other treatments, such as the nausea and stomach ulcers that may occur with oral anti-inflammatory medications. Synvisc remains in the knee joint for a prolonged period, where it functions just like natural synovial fluid – as a shock absorber and lubricant.

What does treatment with Synvisc involve?

If you and your doctor agree that Synvisc is appropriate, you will receive three injections into the knee spaced at one-week intervals.

Since Synvisc is made from naturally occurring hyaluronan, it is absorbed into the body over time. Clinical trials during the development of Synvisc showed that three injections, each one week apart, offer the best pain relief and restoration of joint mobility.

What results to expect

Synvisc users report a reduction in pain soon after the first injection, but most feel the full benefit of the treatment five to nine weeks after the last injection. When you go home after your treatment with Synvisc, relax and take it easy for 24 - 48 hours. An ice pack can be soothing, and you can return to your normal activities within a day or two.

Synvisc users find they enjoy improved mobility. By restoring the shock-absorbing and lubricating properties of the fluid in the knee joint, Synvisc works in harmony with exercise programmes designed to strengthen muscle groups in the leg to protect the joint affected by osteoarthritis.

On average, the benefits of treatment with Synvisc last about six to nine months. Of course, everyone is different. Even people with the same level of pain and inflammation experience different results. Some people find it is more than six months before they begin to feel discomfort or reduced flexibility and mobility in their knee – signs that it is probably time for another course of Synvisc treatment.