

Let's Talk About...

Phenol for spastic muscles

What is phenol and how does it work?

Phenol is a medicine that loosens muscles so they are not too tight. Usually, the doctor gives phenol shots with a small needle into the muscle. Phenol works right away and may last as long as six months. Phenol is usually used to help loosen larger muscles, such as the thigh muscle.



What are the benefits of phenol injections?

Phenol injections treat spasticity. Spasticity is when muscles tighten more than they should. This makes it hard to do things like move, talk, or walk. Loosening muscles with phenol can make your child more comfortable and help their muscles move better.

Using Phenol is a temporary treatment for spastic muscles. The medicine works best if your child also has other treatments, such as a splint, cast, stretching, or special positioning.

Risks of using phenol

Phenol is low risk. Side effects include:

- Bleeding
- Bruising
- Minor discomfort where your child received the shots
- A small muscle knot that forms in the muscle

How will my child receive phenol?

Your child's doctor will inject the phenol where the nerve goes into the muscle. The doctor stimulates the muscle with a small machine to find the exact place to put the phenol. They often inject the phenol in a few spots in each muscle.

Because phenol injections can hurt, the doctor may give your child medicine to help them sleep during the procedure. This is called sedation. If your child receives sedation, the procedure will take place in the Children's Procedure Center (CPC).

A CPC staff member will call you the afternoon before the procedure. They will tell you the foods and liquids your child can have before being sedated. After sedation, your child may feel drowsy for a while. The CPC staff will watch your child carefully until they are awake and ready to go home.

Rarely, a small nerve may be disturbed. If this happens, the discomfort may last longer. Ask your child's doctor about medicine that can treat this discomfort.

