INJECTION TECHNIQUE FOR THUMB TRAPEZIOMETACARPAL JOINT

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BACKGROUND
Degenerative arthritis of trapeziometacarpal joint is a debilitating condition and commonly affects post-menopausal women. Various methods of conservative treatments are suggested including analgesics, physiotherapy, splints and intra-articular injections. While the effectiveness of injection therapy has been investigated, not much has been said about the technique of intra-articular injection.

REFERENCES

TECHNIQUE
We propose a safe, accurate and effective technique for intra-articular injection of CMCJ of the thumb which should be performed in a surgical theatre under fluoroscopic guidance. Following technique is recommended:

1. Anatomical and radiological localisation should be performed and local anaesthesia should be given.
2. From the dorso-radial side of the joint in a pronated hand resting on a flat surface, the needle is directed 45 degrees distally in-line with the thumb. Radiological confirmation of placement of needle tip into the CMCJ is obtained.
3. Once the tip of the needle is intra-articular, active distraction of thumb facilitates stabilisation and easier delivery of the injection.
4. Maximum quantity of 1 to 1.5 mls can now be given which causes increased discomfort to the patient. This is reassuring to the practitioner that the needle is in the correct place.
5. Once the injection is given, thumb is released and fluoroscopic image is taken which confirms distraction of the joint. Pre- and post injection images should be saved.