

April 9, 2020

Pre Injection Assessment Service for Pain Therapy Patients with Spinal Conditions-Effective date April 14, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Effective Tuesday April 14, 2020 Mayfair Diagnostics will provide **pre-injection assessment for patients with spinal chronic pain conditions**, to ensure that your patients receive the most appropriate treatment plan.

This assessment process works as follows:

- The referring physician selects the 'Pre-Injection Assessment' checkbox on the pain therapy requisition and faxes it to Mayfair. The Pre-Injection Assessment box can be found in the middle column of the section of the requisition called 'Therapy Site Requested and it appears as shown below:

For Pre-Injection Assessment
(If checked, we will review prior imaging and suggest appropriate injection therapy.)

- Our Pain Therapy booking specialist will call the patient to complete the Spine Assessment form
- A chronic pain specialist partnered with Mayfair, Dr. Philip Braithwaite*, will review the patient's requisition, spine assessment form, and any applicable diagnostic tests (laboratory tests or imaging in PACS or the Netcare provincial repository). Dr. Braithwaite may also discuss the referral by telehealth video link if preferred, or perform a telemedicine consultation with the patient when required, to develop a comprehensive treatment plan and/or to determine the most appropriate course of action for your patients.
- This report will be sent to the originating referrer.
- If pain injections form part of the treatment plan, these can be booked on behalf of the patient by Dr. Braithwaite at any of the Mayfair clinics offering pain therapy injections , and the patient will be notified.
- A Mayfair Radiologist that sub-specializes in MSK pain therapy will report on the exam once completed for the patient. The report will be sent to Dr. Braithwaite and copied to the referrer and will also be uploaded to Netcare

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*Dr. Philip Braithwaite, MBChB FFARCS, is an experienced Specialist in Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine. He concentrates full-time on Pain Therapy, particularly Interventional Pain, In recent years Dr. Braithwaite has focused on Interventional Pain Therapy and Spine Assessments, both surgical and non-surgical, attempting to provide the best possible outcomes for these and other pain conditions. Dr. Braithwaite's association with Mayfair Diagnostics includes pre-screening assessment for patients referred by their physicians, who may benefit from interventional spine injections

Also, in our communication to you dated March 23, 2020 we stated that Mayfair would temporarily suspend pain therapy appointments. This policy was coordinated with the AHS and is aimed at lowering the risk to our vulnerable population. The injection of cortisone injections can temporarily weaken the immune system of patients and may therefore increase their susceptibility to infections, including viruses.

During this time, when we are trying to collectively flatten the curve and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our communities and around the world, we have decided that your patients' safety and that of our community is the most immediate priority. This is the most responsible position for us to take, and it remains our policy at this time. We continue to monitor the situation closely and we will update you as soon as pain therapy services are ready to resume. In the interim, we remain willing to accept and hold requisitions if requested, ready to book your patients' appointments immediately when service can safely recommence.

Please be assured that we are doing everything we can to work closely with our health partners to provide a high quality service to patients where we can safely do so, while ensuring we are taking all appropriate measures for their safety.

If you have any questions regarding the assessment service or our pain therapy services, please contact BD@radiology.ca
Sincerely,

Tim Mar
Business Development Director

FAQ-Why Mayfair Diagnostics is not Offering Pain Therapy Procedures during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The safety of your patients is very important to us, so we have increased our health and safety protocol and are not offering Pain Therapy services during the Covid-19 pandemic. Mayfair’s decision to temporarily pause our provision of pain therapy procedures is also based on recommendations from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, Canadian Association of Radiologists and Alberta Health Services to avoid elective and non-urgent procedures during the pandemic in order to help blunt the spread of COVID-19.

Mayfair understands the difficulty in living with chronic pain, pain therapy procedures are largely considered routine or elective and can reasonably be postponed in order to limit unnecessary interactions and lower the risk of potential exposure to COVID-19. In most cases, postponing pain therapy services does not have a significant immediate impact on patients’ outcomes, as pain therapy primarily treats symptoms, not underlying disease.

Mayfair has made this decision in the interest of patient and community safety, because the injection of cortisone injections can temporarily weaken the immune system of patients and may therefore increase their susceptibility to infections, including viruses. During this time, when we are trying to collectively flatten the curve and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our communities and around the world, we have decided that your patients’ safety and that of our community is the most immediate priority. This is the most responsible position for us to take at this moment.

Mayfair is currently only offering essential diagnostic imaging services aimed at diagnosing health concerns that require immediate treatment, where a delay in diagnosis would significantly alter a patient’s immediate treatment or where a delay would result in significant or long term morbidity. This is aligned with Alberta Health Services decision to cancel elective procedures. It also helps limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for patients and our employees.

For that reason, we suggest that if a patient is experiencing flu-like symptoms, or are at risk of having had Novel Coronavirus exposure, or any other potential risk of exposure to COVID—19, they should schedule their appointment for when they have recovered. In the interim, they should stay home, use the self –assessment tool on the AHS website, and if necessary, and call Health Link (811). Also, if the patient has returned from another country, we recommend they do not attend a Mayfair clinic for 14 days, even in the absence of symptoms.

Mayfair has strict protocols to ensure the safety of employees and patients that attend our clinics for services currently being offered, but we acknowledge and follow the lead of Alberta Public Health that the safest activity is practicing responsible social and physical distancing.

These medical and health and safety considerations have also been important in our decision to temporarily suspend pain therapy services and to rebook patients for dates further ahead.

Consistent with the messages that are being broadly shared by the government, the Alberta Chief Medical Officer of Health, Alberta Health Services and other health care providers, Mayfair encourages our patients to stay home if possible and rebook their appointments for when the risk of spread and acquiring COVID-19 has lowered. In circumstances of acute or severe pain syndromes, alternative therapies are to be advocated and it may be appropriate for you to discuss additional medical therapies, coping mechanisms and alternative telemedicine specialist consultations or referrals with your patients until normal pain therapy services can safely resume.