Intraocular Triamcinolone Injections for Macular Edema

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1. You may see the medicine floating around inside your eye. If you do, it usually appears at the top of your visual field. It usual disappears within one week.
2. The injection hurts very little. I have done 1000 of these, and no one has cried about it yet. Most people tell me it feels like a pinch. I numb your eye with drops and also with a Q-tip soaked in numbing medicine.
3. Perhaps one patient in 10 develops a red spot on the white of the eye where the tiny needle goes in. This is the equivalent of a bruise on the skin and does not affect vision. It usually goes away in a week. If you are on Coumadin or other blood thinners, this may happen more often or be more extensive. This does not hurt your eye, although it can look bad.
4. Approximately one patient in 4 will develop a high pressure in the eye after the injection. This is why we bring you back for a pressure check at 1 week and 1 month. If your eye pressure goes up we give you eyedrops to bring the pressure down. Approximately 99% of the time, the drops work. Approximately 1% of the time, the drops don't work. If they don't and if the pressure is too high, you may need an operation to bring it down. This is done by a glaucoma specialist.
5. Approximately one patient in 2000 will develop an infection after the injection. I sterilize the surface of the eye with betadine before giving the injection, and ask you to use antibiotic drops after the injection for three days, but there is still a small possibility of infection.
6. The medicine stays in your eye for several months. When it wears off, the macular edema may come back. We will check you for this.
7. There are two forms of triamcinolone. One is called Kenalog, and is commercially available, but is off-label. That means it works in the eye and we use it but the drug company never went to the FDA to get official approval for its use there. The other is Triescence, which is FDA approved for the eye, but is much more expensive. Both Kenalog and Triescence work.