**Definition:**
Viscous supplementation is a product made from a substance called hyaluronan which is derived from rooster combs. Normal joints have high levels of hyaluronan—a chemical that acts as a lubricant and shock absorber. Studies have shown that arthritic joints have lower levels of hyaluronan than non-arthritic joints. Synvisc, Hyalgan and Supartz are all forms of viscous supplementation derived to replenish arthritic joints with sodium hyaluronate, therefore, improving viscosity.

**How is it administered?**
Supplements are given in weekly intervals as an injection into the knee joint. They require three to five injections one week apart depending on which brand is used. Occasionally the interval has to be changed due to scheduling conflicts and that is generally okay if it is kept within a 6- to 14-day period. A new product will soon be available that allows for a single dose application.

**Effectiveness:**
Patients usually do not notice an improvement in pain until after at least the second injection. Results vary among patients but effectiveness can last from a few months to a year depending on extent of arthritis and overall patient fitness.

**Contraindications:**
Previous allergic reaction to hyaluronan products. Seafood allergies. Please tell you doctor if you are pregnant or breast feeding.

**Complications:**
Please call your doctor’s office if you develop redness, swelling, warmth or irritation at the injection site.