

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) Injections

What is PRP?

PRP is platelet-rich plasma. Plasma, platelets, red blood cells, and white blood cells are the components of your blood. Platelets are best known for their role in clotting blood. Platelets also contain and release a variety of growth factors which are important in the healing process of musculoskeletal tissues. PRP contains a higher concentration of platelets, and injecting PRP into the affected area is thought to deliver high concentrations of growth factors that can stimulate the healing process or optimize the local healing environment. PRP does not contain any stem cells and does not consistently regenerate damaged tissue.

What is the Process of Having a PRP Injection?

PRP is created from your own blood. First, a blood sample is obtained in the office on the same day as the procedure. Next, we use a special machine called a centrifuge to separate the platelets and plasma from the rest of the cells in blood, resulting in a platelet-rich plasma. PRP is then injected to the inflamed or injured tissue or joint. After the injection, you may have increased pain at the area of injection for several days. It may be several weeks before you feel a beneficial effect.

Is PRP Treatment Effective?

Research on PRP has shown promising results with this therapy for several conditions, including knee arthritis and tennis elbow. Research on PRP has also demonstrated no beneficial effects for other conditions. Studies on its use for chronic tendon injuries, muscle injuries, rotator cuff repair, and meniscus repair are ongoing. The exact mechanisms by which PRP works are not well understood and is likely dependent on multiple factors, including type of injury (i.e. acute, chronic, post-operative), location in the body, and your age and overall health. Likewise, the optimal number and timing of PRP injections is not well understood.

Concerns Involving PRP Treatment

Because PRP is created from your own blood, it is considered a relatively safe treatment. For certain injuries, because PRP is being utilized to generate an initial inflammatory response to stimulate healing, you may be asked to avoid anti-inflammatory medications, such as Ibuprofen/Advil/Motrin and Aleve/Naprosyn, before and after the PRP treatment. Tylenol/Acetaminophen is okay.

Key Points to Remember

- Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) contains a concentrated source of growth factors that may stimulate healing or optimize the local healing environment.
- PRP does not contain any stem cells and does not regenerate damaged tissue.
- PRP is generated from your own blood.
- Although PRP treatment has demonstrated promising results for several conditions, the optimal number and timing of PRP injections is not well understood.
- Insurances typically do not cover the expense of the procedure. Out-of-pocket expense is \$1,100 per injection and is due on the day of the procedure. A series of injections, if needed, is offered at a reduced rate.
- You may be asked to stop anti-inflammatory medicines before and after the PRP treatment.
- Avoid exercise after the injection for 3-7 days before beginning a rehabilitation exercise program.

For more information, please contact your provider's office:

Dean Wang, MD
Orthopaedic Surgery and Sports Medicine
714-456-7012 (Orange) || 949-515-5210 (Costa Mesa)