



S O U T H W E S T
Spine & Sports

Regenerative Injection Therapy with Platelet Rich Plasma

What is Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP)?

Plasma is the liquid portion of your blood and is primarily composed of water, but also includes proteins, nutrients, and other elements that it can distribute throughout the body. Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) is a sample of the patients' own plasma that is concentrated with platelets (for clotting) and white blood cells (for fighting infection).

PRP is obtained by drawing a small sample of blood from the patient and removing the red blood cells and plasma. This technology yields a high concentration of platelets and white blood cells that is 5-7 times greater than normal. The separation is done in advance at an outside facility and is ready to use at the time of injection.

What is Regenerative Injection Therapy?

Regenerative Injection Therapy utilizes your body's own bioactive proteins, also known as growth factors, to replace, repair, and regenerate tissue. Platelet Rich Plasma is used to deliver the growth factors directly to the pain-initiating site.

When tissue injury occurs, platelets collect at the site of injury and begin the clotting cycle. More importantly, these activated platelets release numerous growth factors that are directly responsible for tissue regeneration. Therefore, by increasing the concentration of platelets, we can deliver a powerful mixture of growth factors directly to the injured tissue and dramatically enhance the body's natural healing process. This treatment may result in a more rapid, efficient, and thorough restoration of the tissue to a healthy state.

What conditions does this procedure treat?

PRP has been used for over 20 years in numerous surgical fields to enhance bone grafting, accelerate wound healing and reduce the risk of infection after surgery. In recent years, physicians have begun injection PRP to treat chronic pain. Tennis elbow, plantar fasciitis, Achilles tendonitis, rotator cuff tears, meniscal tears, osteoarthritis and chronic low back and neck pain are all being successfully treated with the injection of PRP [with the goal of regenerating degenerated connective tissue].

What is the typical procedure?

Musculoskeletal Ultrasound is used to properly identify the area of injury. A local anesthetic will be applied to the area followed by PRP injection with ultrasound guidance to ensure that the appropriate target is reached.

What can I expect following the injection?

Following the Injection, an “achy” soreness is often felt at the site of injury. This soreness is a positive sign that a healing response has been set in motion. This effect can last for several days and gradually decreases as healing and tissue repair occurs. It is important that anti-inflammatory medications such as Ibuprofen, Naproxen and Aspirin be avoided following PRP treatments. These medicines may block the intended effects of the healing response. It is acceptable to use Tylenol and apply ice and elevation as needed. The patient will be permitted to resume normal day to day activities and light exercise following injection. We suggest avoiding strenuous lifting or high level exercise for at least several days after the injection.

A Regenerative Treatment is not “quick fix” and is designed to promote long-term healing of the injured tissue. The regeneration of collagen takes 4-6 months and may require multiple injections. For most cases, 1-3 injections is required at 4-6 week intervals. Pain and functional recovery will be assessed 2-3 weeks after the injection to determine further therapy needs.

What are the risks involved?

Clinical Research shows that PRP injections are extremely safe, with minimal risk for any adverse reaction or complication. Because PRP is produced from your own blood, there is no concern for rejection of disease transmission. There is a small risk of infection from any injection into the body, but this is rare. Research suggests that PRP has an anti-bacterial property which protects against infection.