



**SOUTHWEST**  
Spine & Sports

Regenerative Medicine

# **Platelet Rich Plasma Therapy**

**An Innovative New Treatment for  
Healing Joint and Tendon Disease**



Platelet Rich Plasma Therapy (PRP) is a non-surgical treatment for soft tissue injuries and joint pain. PRP stimulates the body's natural healing forces.

Often a patient using PRP will be able to avoid more invasive procedures such as surgery.

Chronic soft tissue injuries can be treated with PRP as an alternative to steroids.

### What Is PRP?

PRP, or *Platelet Rich Plasma*, is a substance made from your own blood to trigger healing.

Platelet Rich Plasma Therapy is a relatively simple, non-surgical treatment for joint injuries and arthritis. It merges cutting-edge technology with the body's natural ability to heal itself.

The PRP is a concentration of platelets, which can jump start healing. Platelets contain packets of growth hormones and cytokines that tell the tissues to increase rebuilding to enhance healing.

When PRP is injected into the damaged area, it stimulates a mild inflammatory response, which triggers the healing cascade. This leads to restored blood flow, new cell growth, and tissue regeneration. This may ultimately result in faster healing of soft tissue injuries.

### Where Does PRP Come From?

A sample of blood will be taken from a vein in your arm under sterile conditions. The blood will be placed in a



centrifuge, which is a device that spins the blood. This helps to separate the blood cells from the plasma, and allows concentration of the platelets. This concentration of platelets increases healing growth factors approximately 6 to 8 times greater than normal.

The preparation takes about 15 minutes. The finished PRP product is then available for injection into the injured joint or tendon under ultrasound guidance.

Because PRP is prepared from your own blood, there is no concern for rejection or disease transmission. In fact, PRP contains a high concentration of white blood cells, which has an anti-bacterial property and helps to fight infection.

### What Are the Potential Benefits?

PRP enhances your healing potential. It is proving to often be an effective and natural alternative to steroid injections. Patients can see a significant improvement in symptoms as well as a remarkable return of function. This may eliminate the need for more aggressive treatments such as long-term medication or surgery.

### What Can I Expect During My Treatment?

You will visit with the doctor, who will ask about your medical history and give you a brief exam to determine that you are a good candidate for PRP therapy.

We will obtain the blood sample and prepare the PRP.

The doctor will examine the area to be treated, sterilely prepare it, and apply numbing medicine.

Using ultrasound guidance, the PRP will be gently injected into the injured area and joint support tissues.

After your treatment, you will stay for a 15 to 20 minute observation period.

At check-out, you will schedule a follow-up appointment and we will review discharge instructions.

The process may be repeated 1 to 2 times over a six to sixteen week period.

### What Can I Expect After the PRP Treatment?

You may have mild to moderate discomfort which may last up to 1 week.

There may be temporary worsening of symptoms due to a stimulation of the inflammatory response, which is necessary for healing.

Your doctor will instruct you in the use of ice, elevation, reduced activity, and analgesic medications for comfort while the PRP is initiating healing. Also physical therapy or a therapeutic exercise program will be prescribed.

### What Should I Do When I Get Home Following the Procedure?

Because Platelet Rich Plasma releases growth factors, it is important to not disturb the area of injection for at least 48 hours. We ask that you refrain from activities other than necessary walking or driving in order to receive the maximum benefit of the PRP growth factor stimulation. It is helpful if you can be sedentary for 48 hours, and refrain from any vigorous activity for up to 2 weeks following each procedure.

### What Medications Can I Take?

Please do not take any anti-inflammatory medications such as Ibuprofen, Aleve, Motrin or Aspirin. You may take Tylenol or you may be prescribed an appropriate analgesic, if necessary. If you are on an 81-mg. daily dose of aspirin for cardiovascular reasons, please do not take it within the first 48 hours.

Your doctor and Southwest Spine & Sports support staff will discuss your other medications and instructions prior to the procedure, and will review instructions again after the procedure is completed.



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