



MUSCULOSKELETAL MEDICINE, P.C.

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Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) Injections

What is Platelet-Rich Plasma?

Platelet Rich Plasma or PRP is blood plasma with concentrated platelets. The concentrated platelets found in PRP contain huge reservoirs of bioactive proteins, including growth factors that are vital to initiate and accelerate tissue repair and regeneration. These bioactive proteins initiate connective tissue healing, bone regeneration, and repair, promote development of new blood vessels, and stimulate the wound healing process. PRP injections can now be done under ultrasound guidance, which results in a more precise localized delivery of these healing factors into injured ligaments, muscles, and joints.

How does PRP Therapy Work?

To prepare PRP, a small amount of blood is taken from the patient and mixed with an anticoagulant. The blood mixture is then placed in a centrifuge and spun to produce PRP. The entire preparation process takes less than 30 minutes and increases the concentration of platelets and growth factors up to ten times their normal levels.

I've heard of Cortisone Shots; is this same?

Studies have shown that cortisone injections may actually weaken tissue. Cortisone shots may provide a quick fix for temporary relief and lessening of inflammation, but the doctor can only do them a few times in any area because of this tissue weakening effect. They do not generally provide long term healing. PRP therapy is healing and strengthening for these tendons and ligaments. In some cases, PRP has strengthened and thickened tissue up to 40% or more.

What are the Potential Benefits of Treatment?

Patients can see significant improvement in symptoms. This may eliminate the need for more aggressive treatments such as long term medication or surgery, as well as a remarkable return of function.

How many treatments & How often is this therapy?

While responses to treatment vary, several treatment sessions may be necessary. Each set of treatment is spaced approximately 4 weeks apart. There is no limit to the number of treatments you can have, the risks and side effects do not change with the number of injections.

What are tendons & ligaments?

Tendons and ligaments connect muscle to the bone, making it possible for you to do many every day physical activities. Over use or damage to the tendon over a long period of time causes the collagen fibers in the tendon to form small tears, a condition called tendinosis. Damage to tendons and ligaments can occur in multiple sites throughout the body.

Ligaments are composed of collagen fibers that hold one bone to another, stabilizing the joint and controlling the range of motion. When a ligament is damaged, it is no longer able to provide support, weakening the joint.

Tendons and ligaments have poor blood supply. Combined with the stress of day to day activities, they do not easily heal from damage. As a result the tendons and ligaments become inefficient causing chronic pain and weakness. Medical intervention is now possible in a new way.

Is PRP right for me?

If you have a tendon or ligament injury and traditional methods have not provided relief, then PRP therapy may be the solution. The procedure is less aggressive and less expensive than surgery. It will heal tissue with minimal or no scarring and alleviates further degeneration of the tissues. There will be an initial evaluation with the doctor to see if PRP therapy is right for you.

Are there any special instructions?

You are restricted from the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDS) and aspirin one week prior to the procedure and throughout the course of treatments.

Initially the procedure may cause some localized soreness and discomfort. Most patients only require some extra-strength Tylenol to help with the pain. Ice and heat may be applied to the area as needed.

The first week after the procedure, patients will continue their home or physical therapy program, but aggressive physical therapy is discouraged.

How soon can I go back to regular physical activities?

PRP therapy helps regenerate tendons and ligaments but it is not a quick fix. This therapy is stimulating the growth and repair of tendons and ligaments requiring time and rehabilitation. Through regular visits, the physician will determine when you are able to resume regular physical activities.