

Platelet-Rich Plasma for Musculoskeletal Injuries and Conditions



Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) may speed up healing and lessen pain for some musculoskeletal injuries and conditions. This sheet will help you better understand this treatment. If you have any questions or concerns, talk with your healthcare provider. They are here to help.

What is PRP?

This treatment uses your own blood to help heal an injury. Blood is mostly made up of a liquid called plasma. It also contains platelets, red blood cells, and white blood cells. Platelets are the part of blood that helps with clotting and tissue regrowth. They contain proteins called growth factors that help with healing.

For this treatment, blood is drawn from a vein in your arm. It's then put into a machine that separates the platelets from the blood cells. The result is plasma containing a large amount of platelets and their growth factors. This liquid is given as a shot (injection) into your injured joint or muscle. PRP may speed up your recovery.

PRP has been used to treat injured ligaments, muscles, and tendons. It may help treat arthritis or overuse injuries like tennis elbow. The treatment may also be used to improve healing after surgery. PRP seems to work as a treatment for certain chronic tendon injuries. And for low- to moderate-grade knee osteoarthritis. But experts are still studying PRP as a treatment for other conditions.

What happens before a PRP injection?

Your healthcare provider will talk with you about this treatment. Ask questions if something is unclear.

To get ready for this treatment:

- Tell your healthcare provider what medicines you take. Include both prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Also include vitamins, herbs, and supplements. Your provider may instruct you to not use nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen and naproxen, for weeks before your injection and or more weeks after your injection.
- Tell your healthcare provider about any allergies, infections, or illnesses you have. These may affect the safety and effectiveness of PRP.
- Read and sign the informed consent form. Signing the form means you understand what is going to happen. It means you agree to the procedure. Be sure all your questions are answered before you sign the form.
- Check to see if this treatment is covered by your health insurance. Most insurance companies do not cover PRP.

What happens during a PRP injection?

This treatment is often done in your healthcare provider's office. You may get several injections over a few weeks or months.

During this treatment:

- Your healthcare provider first draws a small amount of blood from a vein in your arm.
- Your blood is then sent to a lab, where it is put into a centrifuge. This machine spins the blood at a high speed, causing the platelets to separate from the blood cells. The result is plasma containing a large amount of platelets.
- Your healthcare provider then injects the platelet-rich plasma near your injury.

What happens after a PRP injection?

You may feel more pain for a short time after the injection. You may also have bruising and swelling. It may take a few weeks to notice an improvement in your injury.

What are the risks of PRP?

A PRP injection is a safe treatment. Problems are rare. But all treatments have risks. The risks of PRP include:

- Increased pain at the injection site
- Infection
- Nerve damage
- The treatment does not work

Call

Call right away if you have any of these symptoms, :

- Trouble breathing
- Trouble swallowing
- Loss of consciousness

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as advised by your provider
- Symptoms that don't get better or that get worse
- New symptoms

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