

FACT SHEET

Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) Therapy



WHAT IS PRP?

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) is concentrated platelets and white blood cells derived from your own blood.

Platelet Rich Plasma Injection Therapy (PRP therapy), is a growing treatment approach for soft tissue injuries including tendon, muscle and ligaments. It is also showing good results for mild to moderate osteoarthritis.

While this approach has been used overseas for many years, it's fairly new to Australia in the treatment of musculoskeletal and orthopaedic conditions.

HOW DOES PRP WORK?

Some tissues in the body have a poor blood supply or respond poorly to excessive load, ultimately failing to heal naturally. While some of our primary treatment such as physiotherapy, massage, biomechanical correction and other forms of treatment are used to treat these soft tissue injuries, sometimes the body fails to respond.

PRP therapy utilises the healing properties in blood to allow a healing reaction to occur in a tissue that's not healing on its own. Our blood

has small granules called 'platelets', which contain special growth factors that when released, allow stem cells in the particular tissue to 'switch' on and cause new tissue to be created and heal the injured area.

Take the example of achilles tendinopathy. If the achilles is painful, thickened and not responding to rehabilitation, then the sports physician will inject the PRP into the achilles which will cause the tendon cells (tenocytes/fibroblasts) to create new achilles collagen to strengthen the achilles. White blood cells also enter the area to mop up any achilles tissue that may have been damaged due to the ongoing pain and thickening in the area.

ROLE OF PLATELETS & GROWTH FACTORS

PRP contains highly concentrated platelets. Platelets have been identified to secrete growth factors, which are known to play a role in:

- increasing tissue vascularity and increasing the rate of epithelial tissue production (wound healing)
- attracting other cells that fight infection
- acting as a seal during closures

- providing an immediate surgical hemostatic agent (reduction of bleeding)
- osteogenesis (bone regeneration and repair).

WHAT CAN PRP TREAT?

PRP therapy can be used for:

- orthopedic surgery
- cardiac surgery
- plastic and cosmetic surgery
- ear, nose, throat (ENT) surgery
- oral maxillofacial surgery
- neurosurgery
- vascular surgery
- wound healing
- burn care.

Ask your doctor whether platelet-rich plasma is appropriate for your surgical procedure

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED RESULTS OF PRP?

Because the goal of PRP therapy is to resolve pain through healing, it could prove to have lasting results. Initial improvement may be seen within a few weeks, gradually increasing as the healing progresses. Research studies and clinical practice have shown PRP therapy to be very effective at relieving pain and returning patients to their normal lives. The need for surgery can also be greatly reduced by treating injured tissues before the damage progresses and the condition is irreversible.

For more information

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