



## **Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) Injection**

### **What is a PRP injection?**

Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy uses injections of a concentration of a patient's own platelets to accelerate the healing of injured tendons, ligaments, muscles and joints. In this way, PRP injections use each individual patient's own healing system to improve pain problems. Your pain management doctor can evaluate your symptoms and decide if this procedure may be right for you.

### **How is the procedure performed?**

The procedure is performed in an outpatient surgery center or hospital using ultrasound or x-ray imaging. Your physician will decide which joints, tendons, ligaments or muscles to inject based on the location of your pain and physical examination findings. PRP is derived from your own blood by taking a sample of venous blood, placing it in a special tube, and spinning the blood in a centrifuge. This separates whole blood into its components including red blood cells, platelets, and plasma (the non-cellular fluid in blood). The middle layer constitutes PRP, which contains highly concentrated platelets, the cells that normally promote blood clotting. This component will be injected to the selected area. You will be lying on the procedure bed with blankets covering you while the area for the block is cleaned with an antiseptic. Your physician will use a local anesthetic or numbing medication to numb the skin over the injection site. Once your skin is numb, the physician will direct a small needle to inject the treatment solution.

### **How effective is a PRP injection?**

The PRP injection contains specialized chemicals called growth factors from your own blood. The basic idea behind PRP injection is to deliver high concentrations of growth factors to an area of injury, with the hope of stimulating a healing response and reducing inflammation in the tissue. To some extent, injection of whole blood will stimulate the same response, but to a lesser degree.

### **What risks are involved with a facet joint injection?**

PRP is derived from your own blood ("autologous" transplantation) and there is no chance of having an allergy or immune reaction. The side effects or complications of PRP injection are extremely rare. However, there are always potential risk when placing a needle in the body. These include bleeding, infection and worsened pain.

### **What happens after the injection?**

Immediately after the procedure, you will remain lying down and under observation for a few minutes up to 30 minutes. Do not use ice on the PRP site because ice reduces swelling. The therapy is meant to cause swelling, which helps you heal. You may have some swelling and bruising for three to seven days. Do not use any anti-inflammatory drugs for 2 weeks. PRP therapy takes time to work. It is not like a steroid shot that will make you feel better right away. You may feel more pain at first, since we are causing swelling in the area that was already sore. The swelling is needed for the blood cells to start helping you heal for the long term. Please be patient. Do not drive or perform any vigorous activity for 12-24 hours after the procedure. You can return to normal activities the following day. You will be able to resume your normal diet and medications. Your physician will schedule your follow up appointment.

### **Is a PRP injection right for me?**

If you have chronic joint or tendon pain due to arthritis or trauma PRP injections may benefit you. Talk to your physician about your symptoms and he/she will help decide what is right for you.