

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) Injection

At UW Medicine Sports Medicine Center

This handout explains the treatment called platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injection, and how it is done at the UW Medicine Sports Medicine Center at Husky Stadium.

What is platelet-rich plasma?

*Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) is your own blood that has been modified so that it has extra **platelets** (blood cells that help with blood clotting). PRP helps the healing of soft tissues and bone. It is used to treat nerve injury, tendinitis, osteoarthritis, cardiac muscle injury, and bone repair.*

*At the Sports Medicine Center, we use PRP injections to treat **tendinopathy** (chronic tendon injury) and arthritis.*

How is the PRP injection done?

- First, blood is drawn from your arm and placed in a tube. The tube is put in a *centrifuge* (spinning machine) for 15 to 20 minutes. This spinning concentrates the platelets and removes some of the cells that are not needed for this treatment. The result is PRP.
- The skin over your injured tendon or painful joint is treated with a numbing medicine.
- The PRP is then injected into your tendon or joint. You may feel some pain during the injection. The level of pain varies from person to person.
- *Ultrasound* is usually used during this procedure to help the doctor inject the PRP in the right place.
- After the injection, ice is placed on the area for 10 to 15 minutes.
- The entire procedure usually takes about 45 to 60 minutes.



PRP injections are used to treat the chronic tendon injuries that athletes often deal with.

How do I prepare for PRP?

- **Starting 7 days before your PRP**, stop taking all *nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs* (NSAIDs). Some of these are ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn), Celebrex, Diclofenac, Meloxicam, and indomethacin. Talk with your care team if you have questions or concerns about whether to keep taking any of your medicines.
- Most people can drive after their PRP injection. If you are anxious about driving, bring a driver with you or plan another way to get home.
- If the injection is in your foot, you may be given a boot to wear. You can remove the boot to drive.

Can anyone get a PRP injection?

- PRP injections can be given to anyone who has been evaluated by a healthcare provider.
- We do not do PRP injections for back or neck injuries, such as *herniated disks*.
- If you are visiting our clinic from a distance, please tell the schedulers so that we can review your chart before your PRP injection. We will make sure you do not have any health issues that would make the injections unsafe.

Are PRP injections covered by insurance?

Please call our clinic at 206.598.3294 (option 2) and one of our staff members can help with this.

Are there other treatment options?

- *Autologous blood injections* (ABI) are an option that is often covered by insurance. Autologous blood is the patient's own whole blood that is injected back into their body.
- *Stem cells* are another possible treatment for tendinopathy and arthritis. We do not offer stem cell treatment at this time.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

UW Medicine Sports Medicine Center: Call 206.598.3294 and press 2.