



CAPTA NEWS

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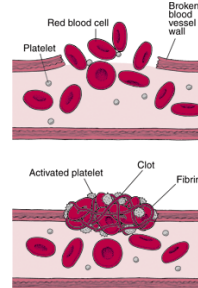
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What is Platelet Rich Plasma?

Written by Nichole Doorn, DPT

Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) is a new, non-surgical treatment, that uses the persons own blood to help speed up the healing process. PRP requires your blood be taken and run through a machine that separates the platelets from your blood. Once the platelet rich plasma is separated it is then injected back into the injured tendon. Once injected, the platelets have been shown to help create new connective tissue (tendons and ligaments) and increase blood flow to the area of injury. This technique was first used during open heart surgery but since then it has been used in several places in medicine such as orthopedics, dentistry, wound healing and sports medicine. It is most commonly being used in treating chronic or non-healing tendon injuries in patients.



Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) is used in several areas throughout the body including the elbow, patella, achilles, and shoulder tendons. In the elbow PRP it is used to treat chronic epicondylar pain such as lateral epicondylitis. In the foot and ankle, PRP is used to treat achilles tendonitis and plantar fasciitis. In the knee it is used to treat the ligaments, the patellar tendon and during a total knee replacement. In one study, it was found that when PRP was used during the total knee surgery the patients had lower blood loss, improved range of motion and required less pain medication. In the shoulder it is used to help along with surgical intervention to repair the rotator cuff muscles.

Platelet rich plasma allows for no risk of rejection because the blood is the patients, but other risks include pain at the injection site, infection associated with the injection, no relief of symptoms, scar formation and neurovascular injury. Contraindications to getting a PRP injection include pregnancy, the presence of a tumor, metastatic activity, active infection or low platelet count. Although, there are several studies that have looked at the effectiveness of using PRP in the repair of tendon injuries, further clinical studies need to be performed with larger sample sizes and to look at healing time following the injection.

Sampson S, Gerhardt M, Mandelbaum B. Platelet rich plasma injection grafts for musculoskeletal injuries: a review. *Curr Rev Musculoskelet Med.* 2008;1(3-4):165-174.

