

## Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) Therapy

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) therapy is an innovative treatment that uses the body's own cells to relieve pain and promote accelerated, long-lasting healing of certain musculoskeletal conditions. Two of the Pittsburgh Steeler's biggest stars, Hines Ward and Troy Polamalu, received this therapy just prior to winning the Super Bowl for injuries that would likely have sidelined them for months. In addition, at least one major league pitcher (LA Dodgers' Takashi Saito), about 20 professional soccer players and hundreds of recreational athletes have undergone the relatively simple procedure with impressive results. As part of his ongoing commitment to providing his patients scientifically-based treatment modalities that are on the leading edge of orthopedic medicine, **Dr. Vic Goradia** is currently offering this breakthrough treatment at **Go Orthopedics**.

Although PRP therapy has been used safely in dentistry for over twenty years, recent advancements have revolutionized the field of orthopedic sports medicine throughout North America and Europe. By using the body's own blood cells, PRP therapy naturally stimulates and accelerates soft tissue healing and regeneration in certain soft tissue injuries and conditions, including:

- Osteoarthritis of the knee, shoulder, hip and spine
- Rotator cuff tears
- Anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries
- Tennis elbow
- Ankle sprains
- Tendonitis
- Ligament sprains
- Chronic plantar fasciitis

The body's first response to any soft tissue injury is to deliver platelets, which play an instrumental role in the normal healing process by secreting growth factors and attracting stem cells--critical components of the healing cascade. PRP therapy magnifies the body's own healing and reparative efforts by delivering a higher concentration of platelets through a single injection than the body would otherwise produce.

This higher concentration of platelets helps accelerate the healing of tendons and ligaments, which translates to a quicker recovery for the occasional athlete as well as for the professional one. The team physician for Major League Soccer's Chivas USA and Los Angeles Galaxy clubs reports an average decreased recovery time of 25-30 percent in players he has treated with PRP therapy for certain knee injuries. Persons who develop tendonitis from everyday activities have also benefited from this technique.

Preliminary studies have demonstrated that PRP therapy is associated with a reduction in pain and faster healing, and has decreased risks and costs as compared to surgical alternatives. In addition, because a patient's own blood is used, there is no risk of a transmissible infection and a very low risk of allergic reaction.

PRP injections are brief outpatient procedures that involve obtaining a small sample of your blood, which is drawn similar to a lab test sample. The blood is then spun at high speeds in a centrifuge, which separates the desired platelets from the other blood components. The concentrated platelet-rich plasma is then injected into and around the site of injury, which appears to jumpstart the body's instincts to repair muscle, bone and other tissue.

The entire procedure, including preparation and recovery time, takes approximately 1 hour. Most patients can expect to return to their jobs or usual activities right after the procedure, although some patients do report increased pain in the treatment area over the following week due to the accelerated healing process. Tylenol® can be taken to minimize or eliminate this discomfort. We discourage the use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDs), such as aspirin, ibuprofen-containing products, such as Motrin® or Advil®, and naproxen (Aleve®), as they may adversely affect the treatment outcome.

Up to three injections may be administered within a 6 month period, and the injections are typically performed two to three weeks apart. However, significant or even complete relief may be achieved after the first or second injection.

Currently, many insurance companies do not cover PRP Therapy, as it is still considered by most to be "experimental"; however, researchers are optimistic that larger studies of its use in the treatment of joints, spine, bones and tendons will convince insurance companies to pay for this treatment. In fact, many physicians and researchers speculate that PRP Therapy may become part of the standard treatment protocol for many musculoskeletal conditions before surgical treatment is warranted.

Potential contraindications to PRP therapy include:

- Thrombocytopenia (low platelet levels)
- Use of blood thinners (aspirin, ibuprofen) or anticoagulant therapy (warfarin/Coumadin, heparin, clopidogrel/Plavix, Aggrenox)
- Active infection
- Tumor and/or metastatic disease
- Pregnancy

Ask your Go Orthopedics physician about this revolutionary treatment option today!