

Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) and Autologous Conditioned Plasma Injections in Soft Tissue Complaints

Background

Your own blood contains growth factors that can promote healing in injuries of muscles, tendons and ligaments. These growth factors may reduce pain and disability and speed the recovery from injury. Platelet rich plasma (PRP) and Autologous Conditioned Plasma (ACP) have concentrates of these growth factors. The difference between PRP and ACP are in their relative concentrates of different cells and factors and the treatment protocols used.

What will the procedure involve?

The skin over your injury will be cleaned. Then local anaesthetic will be injected with a fine needle into the area of your injury, in order to make the site numb.

A small amount of blood (about 2 ml) will be taken from one of your arms, in just the same way that it is taken for a blood test. This blood will then be placed in a centrifuge and spun to obtain the PRP. This is injected into the site of your injury using a fine needle. Afterwards, a plaster will be placed on the skin where the injection has been performed.

You will be given advice about rest and appropriate exercise to perform after the injection.

What are the possible side effects?

As with any procedure there can be side effects. There may be mild discomfort associated with having blood taken and having an injection.

Due to the injection there may be a very small risk of infection, but this is MINIMAL and no greater than for any injection. Sterile precautions are taken throughout the procedure to prevent infection.

The injection may also cause a temporary flare of pain for up to two weeks, as stimulation of healing occurs. The use of regular ice and simple painkillers like paracetamol (avoid NSAIDs) is recommended.

There is a chance of rupture in all cases with significant tendon disease, regardless of whether PRP injections are used or not.

Please be sure to ask the doctor beforehand if you have any questions about the injection, and also to inform the doctor if any concerns arise after the procedure.

Please note that these therapies are relatively new, and your health insurance company may not cover payment. Please liaise with your insurance company.