Dr Jennifer Stebbing DO
MUSCULOSKELETAL & SPORTS MEDICINE

PRP POST TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) is a treatment option for pain and joint instability. This injection therapy is used to decrease pain due to chronic injuries causing arthritis, or more severe injuries of ligaments, tendons, and/or other supporting structures of a joint. After receiving treatment to the structures that support a joint, you will experience discomfort at the injection sites for a few days. This discomfort starts during the procedure as the platelets become activated. It feels like a deep ache. As the anesthesia wears off, this deep ache will become more intensified. Prescription pain medication may be needed on the first night to help sleep. Most people will have discomfort for 2-3 days, some will experience discomfort for 3-5 days. It not uncommon to experience localized swelling in these areas for a week.

AVOID NSAIDS (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) such as Ibuprofen, Aleve, Advil, Celebrex, Motrin, Naprosyn, high dose aspirin (above 81 mg) **AND STEROIDS**, such as prednisone, for at least **6 weeks after treatment**. These medications will interfere with healing. You may take Tylenol (acetaminophen) or any pain medication prescribed by Dr Stebbing.

AVOID ANY VACCINATIONS for 2 months after treatment.

Please contact Dr Stebbing or go to the Emergency Room if you experience any of the following signs or symptoms:

1. Infection at the site of injection. Drainage, heat, or fever may be symptoms.
2. Increasing pain and/or discomfort that is more than expected.
3. Shortness of breath or chest pain for treatment near the lungs. This can be a sign of a punctured or collapsed lung.
4. Extensive bruising from an injury to a blood vessel. Compress the area.
5. Any other unexpected side effects from your treatment.

Activity Restrictions:

- Avoid being a “couch potato.” Maintain normal household activities and walking.
- Gentle full range of motion is encouraged over the first 1-2 weeks.
- At 4 days, you may resume any non-weight bearing exercise program that previously did not cause pain. Elliptical, swimming (not for shoulders or neck), and cycling at a low resistance (sitting) are encouraged.
- Do not overstretch, lift weights, or overtax the joint for 4-6 weeks.
- A driver may be needed on the day of treatment for neck, right hip/knee/ankle/foot.
- Maintain good posture after **back and neck** treatment. Sitting may be more uncomfortable than moving or lying down. Avoid lifting, twisting, pushing/pulling for 3-4 weeks.

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Bathing:

- Avoid swimming or taking a bath/shower for 24 hours. There is a theoretical risk of infection.

Ice/Heat:

- Ice may be beneficial for no more than 15 minutes once or twice a day for the first day, to use only if pain is high. Ice vasoconstricts the blood vessels and can cause frostbite if kept too long on an area. In order for healing to occur, the blood vessels need to be dilated.
- Heat causes dilation of the blood vessels. During the first 24-48 hours, heat can increase pain and swelling. Some people can use heat right away and it reduces their pain. In other people, it causes increased pain and swelling.

Bracing:

- Protect the joint that was treated by using a brace, orthotic or a compression sleeve.
  - Crutches may be needed for **lower extremities** for 1-3 days following treatment, and may be extended for 2 more depending on the degree of inflammation. The goal for severe arthritis, where the cartilage has thinned, is to avoid weight bearing on that joint while the platelets are going to the injured area. We want them to stick to the tissue and not be “squished” away.
  - A sling or arm brace may be needed for 1-2 days following **shoulder** treatment. For large rotator cuff tears this is a necessity. For smaller tears or tendinopathy, it would be for comfort.
  - SI belt is beneficial for SI joint instability.

Supplements/Medication:

- The Root Cause Protocol is encouraged (see separate handout.)
- Glucosamine, MSM, and/or chondritin can be beneficial for arthritic joints (hips, knees, feet).
- Protein is needed for healing and repair, 1mg per kg of weight. (1kg = 2.2 pounds)
- Fish oil may be restarted the following day after treatment.
- Blood thinners can be restarted the following day (e.g. Coumadin, Lovenox)

Physical Therapy:

- Start or resume 1-3 weeks following treatment.

Chiropractic or Osteopathic Manipulation:

- Avoid HVLA and drop table techniques.

Massage:

- Can be done after 4 days. Avoid cross frictional massage on the areas that were treated.

Follow up:

- Normal follow up evaluation is 3-4 weeks following treatment. However, if you are experiencing increased pain or stiffness, soft tissue osteopathic manipulation may be extremely beneficial. Shockwave is particularly helpful for pain in the few days after treatment, especially for rotator cuff treatment.

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