
PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma) Injection - Knee Osteoarthritis

Non/pre-operative management of knee pain at Australian Sports Doctors (ASD)

Experienced medical practitioners from ASD will assess you, discuss options for improvement of your knee pain and function, and answer your questions about:

- Muscle conditioning to balance the forces on the knee joint
- Weight management and knee load reduction, where appropriate
- Oral medications, steroid and hyaluronic (Durolane/Synvisc) visco-supplementation injection
- PRP (platelet enriched plasma) injections into the knee if Synvisc is not appropriate for you. The option is then provided to book an injection into the knee joint space with ASD or a medical imaging provider.

What is PRP and how is it collected?

PRP is the straw-coloured plasma component extracted from your own whole blood, containing a rich concentration of platelet cells – with their associated growth factors – in amounts 2 times greater than usually found in whole blood. Once 30mls of your blood is collected (only as uncomfortable as a routine blood test, a centrifuge is used to compact red cells to the bottom of the syringe, leaving straw coloured plasma and platelet cells to be extracted from the top. A similar sized needle is then used to inject your PRP into your knee while it is fresh – all during the one 30 minute appointment.

How does PRP work?

After extensive research it is still unclear how PRP works. The increased concentration of platelet cells is associated with growth factors and anti-inflammatory factors that are thought to calm the painful inflammatory process associated with knee osteoarthritis - potentially for 1-2 years. PRP has not been proven to regrow cartilage in living humans but there is some evidence that it can reduce pain in several joint and tendon related conditions, including knee osteoarthritis.

Does PRP work for everyone?

PRP isn't suitable for everyone, but studies have indicated that younger patients with early to moderate osteoarthritis may have an appreciable improvement in knee pain and function. Response rates vary between studies, the degree of arthritis involved, and the type of PRP protocol administered, but has been reported to be over 60%, with some studies showing data out to 1-2 years.

How is PRP injected and what are the risks?

A single 6ml syringe of your PRP is injected directly into the knee joint space by a medical practitioner via a needle of similar size and type used for routine blood tests. As with any injection, there is a small risk of bleeding or knee joint infection (said to be less than 1:100 in healthy people). Every effort is made to reduce the risk of infection, using antiseptics and sterile equipment. A temporary flare of stiffness, pain and swelling may occur but generally responds well to paracetamol and ice packs. Improvement may be noticed within the first few weeks and may last 1-2 years in some of those that respond.

How much does PRP cost at ASD/AOSM?

The gap after Medicare for your initial consultation (to discuss your suitability for PRP) is generally \$50 -100, depending on the duration of the consultation and other issues discussed. Medicare, Workcover and TAC generally do not provide patient rebates for the PRP injection. A fee of \$335 (incl GST) applies per injection. The consumables and centrifuge required to collect PRP comprise the majority of the cost.

How do I book an appointment?

You can book an appointment online at www.sportsdocs.com.au via the white button over the 'running woman' on our main front page, or by calling [\(03\) 9455 1112](tel:0394551112). Appointments are available 7 days per week, most weeks of the year.