



Is a tendon injury spoiling your game?

Looking for a way to avoid surgery?

The sports medicine physicians at Summa's Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine practice, members of Summa Center for Sports Health's medical team, are now offering platelet rich plasma (PRP) therapy to treat patients with chronic, difficult-to-heal tendon injuries.

What is platelet rich plasma (PRP) therapy?

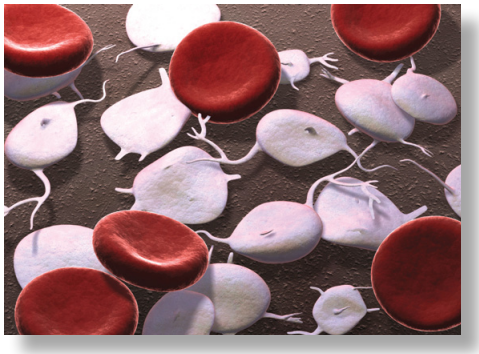
Platelet rich plasma (PRP) therapy is a promising new way to treat tendon injuries. It uses the patient's own blood to deliver a concentrated solution of platelets to the site of an injury to promote rapid healing.

How does it work?

Recent scientific research has given physicians a better understanding of how the healing process works, including the role that platelets play in the healing process.

In the past, the role of platelets in the healing process was thought to be limited to blood clotting. But research has shown that platelets also release proteins that attract healing factors to an injury site to help remove dead tissue, enhance the growth of new tissue and promote healing.

Recent medical literature suggests that PRP therapy can positively affect inflammation, post-operative blood loss, infection, pain medication requirements, bone growth and wound and soft tissue healing.



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Injuries to tendons are difficult and slow to heal because, unlike muscle tissue, there is limited blood flow to tendons, which are composed of tough, fibrous tissue. PRP therapy provides a new way to treat tendon injuries, including chronic conditions such as lateral epicondylitis (tennis elbow), plantar fasciitis, acute muscle and ligament injuries and cartilage degeneration.

Who's a good candidate for PRP therapy?

Any patient who has suffered a tendon injury that has not responded to other therapies may wish to consider PRP therapy. PRP therapy offers a safe, minimally invasive and low-risk alternative to surgery for hard-to-heal tendon injuries. However, patients with metastatic disease or tumors (cancer), active infections, a low platelet count, are pregnant and/or are breastfeeding should check with their physicians before being treated with PRP therapy.

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How safe is PRP therapy? Are there any risks? If so, what are they?

PRP therapy has been safely used and documented for more than 20 years in many fields, including: dentistry, ear, nose and throat surgeries, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, urology, wound healing, cosmetic surgeries, cardiothoracic surgeries and facial and jaw surgeries.

PRP therapy is a low-risk and minimally invasive procedure. The risk involved with PRP therapy is comparable to the risk associated with any injection (shot).

What happens during the procedure?

1. First, a small amount of blood is drawn from the patient's arm.
2. The blood is then placed in a device called a centrifuge, which spins the blood rapidly for about 15 minutes. This step separates the different components of the blood.
3. The physician discards the components that do not promote healing. What remains is a concentrated solution of platelets. Platelets are rich in healing properties called growth factors, which stimulate various healing processes within the body.
4. Once the platelet-rich solution is prepared, the patient receives a local anesthetic injection before the procedure.
5. Using ultrasound imaging technology, the injured area is identified and marked. The physician uses ultrasound to target the precise site of the injection in order to place the PRP solution at the injury site.
6. The patient rests after the injection for 5-10 minutes and is discharged home with post-procedure instructions. Increased pain may result for approximately 5-7 days following the injection. This is not uncommon and is part of the healing process.
7. A follow-up visit is usually scheduled within 6-8 weeks to determine if any additional treatments are necessary. In most cases, 1 to 3 injections are required, scheduled at 6- to 8-week intervals.
8. Patients are encouraged to participate in physical therapy following the procedure, which helps speed recovery.

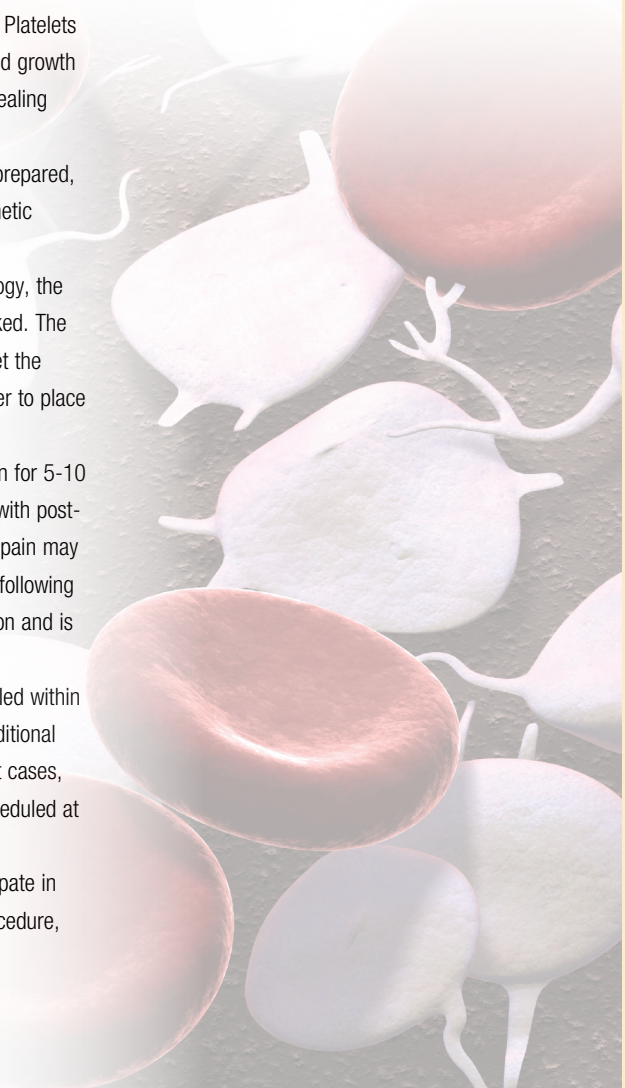
How much does PRP therapy cost?

Costs will vary depending on medical insurance coverage. It is recommended to verify coverage prior making an appointment or undergoing treatment. On average, a patient needs 1 to 3 treatments scheduled at 6- to 8-week intervals, depending upon the severity of the injury and the ability of the patient's body to heal.

Who is offering PRP therapy?

Dr. Nilesh Shah, the Sports Health Center's medical director, is now accepting patient appointments for PRP therapy. He has been performing PRP injections for more than four years. Dr. Shah completed his sports medicine fellowship at The Ohio State University. He is board-certified in family practice and possesses a certificate of added qualifications in sports medicine.

To schedule an appointment, call (330) 379-5051 ext. 4.





Nilesh Shah, M.D.

Dr. Shah obtained his M.D. degree from The Ohio State University College of Medicine in 1998. He completed his family practice residency at Grant Medical Center and a sports medicine fellowship at The Ohio State University. Since 2002, Dr. Shah has practiced in Akron, specializing in the treatment of musculoskeletal injuries. He is board-certified in family practice and possesses a certificate of added qualifications in sports medicine. An avid runner, Dr. Shah has competed in several marathons and a half-ironman triathlon.

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