



3 Common Sports Injuries that Benefit from PRP Treatment

Many sports injuries improve with platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections.

Both professional athletes and weekend warriors can become sidelined by injury. Athletes were traditionally given the choice of either sitting out for weeks (or months) to heal or undergoing major surgery — neither of which is particularly desirable.

PRP injections offer a radical third alternative. Minimally invasive, safe and quick, this orthobiologic treatment is highly effective for many of the most common sports injuries.

What Is PRP?

A form of regenerative medicine, PRP injections involve drawing a small quantity of the patient's blood, then isolating and concentrating the healing platelets.

An orthopedic surgeon or sports medicine doctor then injects the concentrated plasma into a carefully chosen location near the injury. To ensure that the injection reaches its target, the doctor uses either ultrasound or fluoroscopy to visualize the targeted structure.

In addition to platelets, PRP contains components known as growth factors. Growth factors are a critical component of the human body's natural bone and soft-tissue healing mechanisms.

For some sports injuries, the body can heal itself over a period of weeks or months. For more severe injuries, the body simply does not have enough self-healing power. In both cases, PRP jump-starts the natural healing process and speeds it along.

Treating Tennis Elbow with PRP

PRP injections are particularly effective for treating lateral epicondylitis, commonly known as tennis elbow.

In this condition, tendons of the forearm become inflamed, typically from overuse and repetitive stress. Although playing tennis can cause lateral epicondylitis (especially if you have biomechanical deficits), it is common in rock climbers, painters, carpenters, cooks, assembly line workers and anyone who engages in repetitive arm movement.

Because these tendons receive little blood, they are especially slow to heal. PRP injections address the pain of tennis elbow and initiate healing. Research demonstrates the efficacy of [PRP injections](#) for restoring function in patients suffering from tennis elbow.



PRP Injections for Rotator Cuff Injuries

The rotator cuff, a system of muscles and other soft tissues that allows the shoulder to function, is a common site for sports injuries. Any repetitive overhead arm motion (such as throwing a baseball or shooting baskets) can cause problems. However, the rotator cuff is also a common site of damage from falls and other accidents.

Although full rotator cuff tears typically require surgery, partial tears and inflammation in the bursa both respond especially well to PRP injections.

In addition, rotator cuff tendinopathy or tendinitis) can also benefit significantly from platelet-rich plasma treatments.

Plantar Fasciitis and PRP Treatments

Plantar fasciitis is the most common injury experienced by runners and other patients who work on their feet or play sports. This chronic condition results in severe heel pain that, in many patients, resists conservative forms of treatment. Left untreated, plantar fasciitis can progress to bone spurs that require surgery.

Many patients undergo cortisone injections for this and other painful sports injuries. Although cortisone shots can reduce pain temporarily (up to one year), they do nothing to heal the injury. In fact, some research indicates that multiple [cortisone injections](#) over time may lead to calcaneal fat pad atrophy resulting in increased heel pain. .

PRP injections also relieve pain, but more importantly, they initiate the healing process so that patients retain the majority of their restored function.

Many other types of sports injuries can also benefit from platelet-rich plasma injections, including Achilles tendinopathy, UCL (Ulnar Collateral Ligament) tears, and hamstring injuries.