

PATIENT INFORMATION

PRP Injection: What to Expect

After your platelet-rich plasma injection — what's normal, what to do, and when to call us

What to expect

- **First several hours:** Mild soreness and a feeling of pressure or fullness at the injection site are normal. Numbing medication is usually not used so the area may be tender.
- **Days 1–7: Soreness is expected and is part of how PRP works** — the injection triggers the inflammatory response that begins the healing cascade. Discomfort is often greater than after cortisone and may last up to a week.
- **Weeks 2–6:** Gradual improvement. PRP does not provide quick relief like cortisone — it is a slower healing response.
- **Weeks 8–12+:** Full benefit is typically reached around 3 months; some patients continue improving through 6 months. If a second injection is planned, it is usually given 4–6 weeks after the first.

IMPORTANT — AVOID ANTI-INFLAMMATORY MEDICATIONS

Do not take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve), or other NSAIDs for 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after your injection. These medications blunt the healing response PRP is designed to create. **Acetaminophen (Tylenol)** is safe and is the preferred pain reliever during this window. Also avoid cortisone injections in the same area for 6 weeks before and 6 months after PRP. **Exception:** if you take a daily low-dose aspirin (e.g., 81 mg) for cardiovascular reasons, **do not stop it** — the cardiac protection outweighs the small effect on PRP.

What to do at home

- **Rest the treated area for 48–72 hours.** Avoid strenuous activity, heavy lifting, and impact loading.
- **Ice** for 10–15 minutes every few hours for comfort.
- **Acetaminophen (Tylenol)** for pain. No NSAIDs (see above).
- **Resume gentle activity at days 3–5** and gradually return to normal activity over 2–3 weeks. Continue prescribed physical therapy.

Call our office if you experience

- A fever of 100.4°F (38.3°C) or higher
- **Increasing** warmth, redness, or swelling after 72 hours (rather than improving)
- Pain that worsens beyond one week or is not relieved by ice and acetaminophen
- Any rash, hives, or other allergic-type symptoms

A note on safety and the medication we use

PRP is prepared from your own blood using an FDA-cleared system. Because the material comes from you, there is no risk of allergic reaction or transmissible disease, and PRP does not affect blood sugar. Results vary — some patients see substantial, durable relief; others see modest benefit. Infection risk is very low, and PRP avoids the cartilage and tendon concerns of repeated cortisone injections.