

How Foot and Ankle Surgeons Can Benefit From PRP

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Since it is a new science, many people are skeptical about Platelet-Rich Plasma, otherwise known as PRP. There are some studies out there that state that PRP work no better than a similarly administered placebo, but there are many other studies and doctors that claim that PRP works and works well. This also works well at a much lower cost and less side effects, than traditional medicine.

One branch where the skepticism is loud and clear is podiatry, which deals with feet and ankles. Trying to combat this skepticism can help many surgeons to lower complication rates, improve patient satisfaction, and have better outcomes. For instance, here is a list of cases where PRP has been effective for the feet and ankles.

1. Plantar Fasciitis

PRP has become rather common as a treatment for Plantar Fasciitis, with many studies to prove the efficacy of this treatment. For instance, Dr. Daanial Kassiech or Sarasota Neurology claims that PRP is one of the most effective treatments for this condition, and that PRP is actually fully cure it. Many of his patients have avoided surgery just by utilizing PRP therapy.

This is done with no down time, no rehabilitation, and no side effects. This would explain why plantar fasciitis is the 5th popular medical condition treated by PRP. This can be explained by over 3 million people that are diagnosed with this and no other treatment really works for it, besides, in fact, PRP.

2. Achilles Tendonitis

This is another condition that can be fairly hard to treat, and gets worse over time unless healed. Many surgical approaches are often tricky and generally do not end up with good results. Because of this, the main treatment option is simply to give patients corticosteroids to reduce the pain, but really nothing else to treat the symptoms.

However, there have been many studies done that have shown that PRP is a lot more effective, including that from the European Foot and Ankle Society. This means that PRP is safer and more effective alternative than any other treatments available.

3. Diabetic Foot Ulcers

Diabetic foot ulcers can be troublesome, especially when they do not heal or heal properly. Over 2.5 million Americans with diabetes who suffer from these ulcers. About 11% of these cases may need amputation of their affected limb. However, some studies have noted that just one injection of PRP and a topical solution bi-weekly started to heal the ulcers in just 8 weeks. Topical PRP also has been shown to work better than anti-septic creams as well.

4. Regenerating Bones

Bone regeneration is most commonly needed in foot and ankle area. Although mechanical stabilization works best, the utilization of PRP has been surprising. PRP helps with healing bones and soft tissue at the damage site. According to a recent systematic review of 64 articles, the conclusion was to include more PRP therapy into the healing of foot and ankle bones.

The science behind this is solid, for bone or tissue to form, three things are needed in the area:

- A scaffold for the growth to take place
- Biological stimulants to signal proteins
- Stem cells that provide bone building potential

All three of these are crucial for bone formation.. PRP can provide at least two of these, so there is no reason to ignore it when it comes to bone regeneration.

5. Ankle Sprains

This is an incredibly common condition, and can be effectively treated by using PRP therapy. In one randomized controlled trial, researchers studied the effects of PRP injections on athletes with ankle sprains. This study showed that not only did PRP reduce the healing time by 20 days, but that they also experienced much less pain. This can reduce the recovery period from 6 weeks, for just about 2 or 3 weeks.

Immobilization is Vital

When it comes to foot and ankle related injuries, one thing that really cannot be avoided is rest and rehabilitation. This is true regardless of whether PRP is administered. Because of this, many of the studies that shows PRP to be ineffective often don't use rest and rehabilitation, and that alone can be an issue.

PRP is in no way a magic pill. All foot injuries need rest and rehabilitation in order to properly heal. With these two combined, it can drastically reduce healing times.

How can Foot and Ankle Surgeons Benefit?

Using PRP in foot and ankle injuries is not going anywhere, so utilizing it would be the best way to go. Test it out with your patients, and try using platelet-rich plasma therapy instead of simply prescribing pills or doing costly surgeries. Your patients will thank you in the end.