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**Sherwood Forest Hospitals**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) injection

**Information for patients**

**This booklet contains information about the PRP injection that you have been advised to have and aims to answer some of the questions you may have about the operation and your stay in hospital.**

## **About PRP injection at Sherwood Forest Hospitals**

At our King's Mill Hospital site, there is an elective orthopaedic ward and an elective Day Case Unit (DCU). At our Newark site, there is an elective day case unit (Minster ward). The ward and site of your elbow injection will be discussed with you by your consultant team in the outpatient clinic before your injection.

You will be admitted to one of these wards during your stay in hospital. On each ward, a named nurse will be allocated to you to co-ordinate your hospital care.

You will be admitted to the hospital on the day of your PRP injection and go home the same day.

## **Pre-injection measurements and testing**

On the day of your injection you will be seen by one of the physiotherapy team where you will be asked to complete some simple questionnaires about your symptoms and have your grip strength measured. You will also be provided with a simple wrist splint to wear following your injection.

These questionnaires and tests will be repeated at six months and one year after your injection to allow us to fully assess and understand how well the PRP injection treatment works.

This is essential for us to fully understand the benefits of this procedure and will be explained to you at your clinic visit before you have any injections.

The therapy team will also discuss any questions you have about the rehabilitation programme we would like you to do following the PRP injection.

## **What to bring**

Please leave valuables at home. We advise that you make arrangements to be brought into hospital and taken home the same day.

# Day of your PRP injection procedure

You will be able to eat and drink as usual the day of your injection.

**You must not smoke after midnight the day before the operation.**

## Elbow tendinopathy (tennis and golfer's elbow) – what is the problem?

Following overuse (too much activity) or unaccustomed activity of the elbow, the tendons can react and become inflamed (warm, tender and/or swollen) and painful. With simple rest and not using the elbow too much this can settle down and go away. However, for some people this does not happen and the pain and discomfort can carry on for a number of weeks or months. This is thought to be because the body is struggling to heal and repair itself. This can happen for a number of reasons.

## Platelet Rich Plasma injection – what is it?

Growth factors are important molecules in the body that help bones, ligaments and tendons to heal properly. Molecules called platelets and leukocytes produce these growth factors and have been shown to help injured tendons get better. By injecting these molecules into the injured tendon, we improve the healing process and over time your tendon problem gets better.

## How is it done?

In the operating theatre, the surgeon will simply remove some of your own blood (usually enough to fill a small syringe) and put this in a machine that will spin it around to separate the different molecules in it. This takes a few minutes. After this the surgeon can then take out the cells that are needed (platelets and leukocytes) and inject them into the problem area in your elbow, usually the tendon on the side of your elbow.

# After my Platelet Rich Plasma injection

You will have a small plaster over the injection site, unless you are allergic to them. This can be taken off when you get home.

## Will I have to wear a splint?

Yes. You should have received a wrist splint to use after your injection when you were seen by the physiotherapy team for completion of your questionnaires and have been told how to use it and when.

## How can I sleep?

Ordinary pillows can be used to give you comfort and support (feather pillows are easier to use than foam ones). We would simply encourage you to sleep in positions that are comfortable to you.

## Will the elbow hurt after my injection?

Some patients find the elbow is painful and sore after their injection. However, this only lasts for the initial few days or weeks. The PRP injection is designed to improve your elbow over time and it can take a few months to feel the full benefit, so don't worry if it doesn't feel better straight away.

## Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is important to get the most out of your PRP injection. Please be guided by your level of discomfort; we do not expect you to get full function on the first day – you can do too much.

**Do not start any exercises until a physiotherapist has shown you or advised you.**

## Exercises

The physiotherapy team should have educated you on the rehabilitation plan at the time of your injection.

## When can I go home?

- When you have recovered from your injection.
- When your pain is controlled.

## Is that the end of my treatment?

A physiotherapy appointment for ongoing treatment will be made for you at our King's Mill or Newark physiotherapy department (usually two weeks after your injection).

You will also go to the follow-up clinic at either King's Mill or Newark Hospital. This is run by the advanced practice physiotherapist and/or nurse specialist. They will see you six weeks after your operation. They can also arrange a quick appointment with your surgical team if necessary.

At six months and one year, you will have your clinic check-ups with the advanced practice physiotherapist at King's Mill or Newark. The assessment and testing done before your injection will be repeated to see how well the treatment has worked.

The advanced practice physiotherapist will discharge you unless your surgeon's opinion is necessary. In this case we would make a further appointment for you to see the consultant.

## What will I do as an outpatient?

You will continue with your exercises with the help of a physiotherapist. You will be given more exercises if you need them.

You will gradually work on developing the strength in your elbow and arm, progressing to full functional movement. We will encourage you to learn how to use your elbow comfortably.

## When can I do my normal activities?

This depends upon your symptoms. Most people are comfortable by between two and six weeks after injection.

Driving can be resumed when you are comfortable and safe to control a car. It is wise to discuss this with your insurance company.

The following table gives you the timescales for the amount of rest required to your arm before resuming a particular type of activity.

Type of activity	Rest
Light work (no lifting)	2 - 3 weeks
Medium (light lifting)	3 - 6 weeks onwards
Heavy (above shoulder level)	6 - 12 weeks

If you feel that your work or leisure activities come into the heavy category, please discuss this with the physiotherapists so that we can plan the best rehabilitation for you.

**If you are at all worried you should contact Sherwood Forest Hospitals' Shoulder and Elbow Team.**

## Useful contact numbers

### King's Mill Hospital

Telephone: 01623 622515

### Newark Hospital

Telephone: 01636 681681

### Extension number

Mr Kurian's secretary	4117 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Mr Bidwai's secretary	4175 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Mr Mitra's secretary	6318 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Nurse surgical care practitioner	4104 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Advance practice physiotherapist	6148 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
King's Mill Day Case Unit	3048 (Monday to Sunday, 24 hours)
King's Mill orthopaedic ward	2414 (Monday to Sunday, 24 hours)
Newark Hospital Day Case Unit (Minster ward)	5850 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
King's Mill physiotherapy department	3221 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Newark Hospital physiotherapy department	5885 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)



## **Further sources of information**

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

## **Patient Experience Team (PET)**

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King's Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

**Email:** [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net)

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email [sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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