

PLATELET-RICH PLASMA (PRP) INJECTIONS

FOR LOW BACK (LUMBAR) FACET JOINT PAIN



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What Are Facet Joints?

Facet joints are small joints located on both sides of the spine. They help guide movement and provide stability. When these joints become irritated, they can cause low back pain, stiffness, and pain with movement.



What Is Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP)?

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) is a treatment made from your own blood. Platelets contain growth factors that may help support healing and reduce inflammation in injured or painful tissues. PRP is considered a regenerative therapy.

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How PRP Works for Facet Joint Pain

PRP is injected directly into the affected facet joints in the lower back. The goal is to:

- Reduce inflammation
- Support tissue healing
- Improve pain and function over time

PRP is considered a regenerative treatment rather than a temporary pain-blocking injection. No steroids are used in this procedure.

A small amount of blood is drawn from your arm.

The blood is processed in a centrifuge to concentrate the platelets.

The skin is cleaned, and local anesthetic is used where the platelets will be injected.

Using X-ray (fluoroscopy) guidance, PRP is injected into the targeted facet joints.

The procedure usually takes 30–60 minutes, and you go home the same day.

Mild pressure or discomfort during the injection may occur. Temporary soreness in the low back afterward. Most patients tolerate the procedure well.

It is common to have soreness or stiffness for several days. Pain may temporarily increase before improvement begins. Avoid strenuous activity for a few days as instructed. Do not take anti-inflammatory medications (such as ibuprofen or naproxen), as they may interfere with the healing process.

You may use acetaminophen (Tylenol) for discomfort if allowed.

When Will I Feel Relief?

PRP may not provide immediate relief. Improvement typically begins around 2-6 weeks, with continued improvement over several months. Results vary from person to person.

Benefits of PRP for Facet Joint Pain?

Uses your own blood (very low allergy risk). Minimally invasive. May provide longer-lasting improvement than steroid injections. Avoids repeated steroid exposure



Risks and Side Effects

PRP injections are generally safe. Possible risks include:

- Temporary pain or stiffness
- Bruising at the injection site
- No improvement in symptoms

Your provider will discuss your individual risks before the procedure.

Who May Not Be a Good Candidate?

PRP may not be recommended if you:

- Have a bleeding or platelet disorder
- Have an active infection
- Are on certain blood-thinning medications
- Have cancer involving the spine
- Your provider will review your medical history to ensure PRP is appropriate.

How Many Treatments Are Needed?

Some patients benefit from one injection, while others may need a series of treatments depending on the severity of facet joint degeneration and response to therapy.