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News

Doctor uses new procedure to treat orthopedic injuries

SEAN d'OLIVEIRA | Forum Publishing Group
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For residents seeking alternatives to surgery for orthopedic injuries and pain, a [Pompano Beach](#) doctor has recently begun offering a substitute.

About six months ago, Dr. Len Remia, an orthopedic surgeon, started offering patients a chance to try a less-invasive alternative to surgery called Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) injections.

The body normally sends blood platelets and white blood cells to an injured area to initiate the healing process. When the PRP procedure is used, blood platelets and white blood cells are taken from the patient, and then injected into the injured area to accelerate the process.

"I think it's a great alternative for patients looking for nonsurgical procedures," Remia said. "The platelets imitate healing to have a supercharged healing process in that area."

However, the alternative procedure is not for everyone.

"It depends on the injury and patient, but they're much more beneficial because they actually inject the growth factor that allows healing to occur," Remia said.

The PRP injections are recommended to patients with minor injuries such as sprains, tennis elbow, joint pain, plantar fasciitis, arthritis and tendinitis.

Patients' reactions to the procedure have been mixed, Remia said. Some have reported dramatic healing, while others have been slow to react to the relatively new practice.

"It's not a miracle cure," he said.

But the injections are considered safe because they are derived from the patients' own blood.

"Other than possible side effects from the local injection, there are no major risks and only minor discomfort," Remia said. "They're not going to risk rupturing the tendon from the injection."

One drawback for patients is that insurance companies do not yet cover the procedure because no long-term studies have been conducted on the injections. However, the risks are considered minimal.

"We can't tell the patient with certainty if it will work, but it is low-risk," he said.

Laura Bellard, a medical assistant for Dr. Chad Roghair, who also has begun using the injections as an alternative to surgery, said patients have become increasingly curious about the procedure since its introduction several months ago.

"All of them have been satisfied with the procedure," Bellard said.

As the effects of the injections are scrutinized, Remia said he believes the procedure will become more commonplace.

"It's an alternative treatment, and I only offer it to patients who truly don't need surgery," he said. "It's not a time-consuming or difficult procedure."

For more information, visit www.orthojointreplacement.com or call 1-877-543-2500.

