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PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma) injection treatment for tennis/golfer's elbow

I've listed you today for a procedure called PRP injection to treat pain from tennis/golfer's elbow. Please find below some information about the expected outcome and possible problems for your information:

What is Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP)? PRP is made from your own blood. The blood sample is specially centrifuged and the layer containing the platelets is then isolated. These platelets (thrombocytes) are rich in growth factors that will aid the natural healing process in the tendon.

What's going to happen when I come in? You will be taken to the treatment room. A blood sample of about 15ml is taken from a vein in your arm. This blood sample is then centrifuged for 5 minutes. The plasma containing the platelets is then withdrawn. While you are waiting for this to happen you will have an injection with local anaesthetic to numb the skin around the elbow. Under Ultrasound guidance the PRP is then injected into the damaged tendon. You will only need a small dressing to cover the injection site. The whole process will take about 15-20 minutes.

Is it going to be painful? There will be some discomfort from injecting the local anaesthetic, but this will reduce the pain from injecting the PRP. The PRP injection can still be uncomfortable as several passes with the needle through the tendon and near the bone are required. Most patients tolerate the procedure well. You may experience some pain in the days after the PRP injection, but normal painkillers will be enough to deal with that.

Possible side effects: Since the injection contains your own platelets, there should be no major side effects. You may experience mild pain/irritation for a few days and there may be some bruising.

Infection: This is a very rare complication following the injection. If you notice increasing redness, swelling and pain 3-10 days following the injection you should seek advice from me, your GP or a Doctor in A&E.

Likely outcome: Although PRP has been used for many years and although there is good scientific evidence to support its use, there is no success guarantee. PRP supports your body's own healing mechanisms and it will take time for you to notice the difference. This may take about 2 months. During that time, you should experience a slow improvement in pain levels. Few patients need a second injection.

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Restrictions following the PRP injection: You can use your arm for normal light daily activities straight away. You can ice the area for a few minutes several times a day. Avoid heavy lifting and strenuous work as well as sporting activities for 4-6 weeks to support the healing process.

Physio: This should start about 4 weeks following the PRP injection to support the rehab process.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication (NSAID's): NSAID's can suppress the effects of the growth factors in the PRP injection. You should therefore stop taking any NSAID's for 7 days before and after the injection. Commonly used NSAID's are Voltarol, Ibuprofen, Nurofen and Naproxen

If you would prefer to discuss this again with me prior to treatment then please contact my secretary: Tel 07935 480188, email jfortho.secretary@gmail.com

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