

## PRP treatment aids healing of elbow injuries say researchers

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As elbow injuries continue to rise, especially in pitchers, procedures to help treat and get players back in the game quickly have been difficult to come by. However, a newer treatment called platelet rich plasma (PRP) may pose hope, according to researchers presenting their findings at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's Specialty Day meeting in San Francisco.

"PRP therapy is a very exciting area of research and a number of questions still need to be answered, including optimal concentration, number and timing of injections, the role of [white blood cells](#) and the role of ultrasound or image guidance when performing these injections," said lead researcher, Scott A. Crow, MD of the Kerlan-Jobe Orthopaedic Clinic in Los Angeles, California. "Despite these questions, this study indicates that in the short term, PRP may be an effective option to successfully treat partial ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) tears in the elbow of athletes."

The researchers followed 17 athletes with a partial UCL tear. All patients had failed [conservative treatment](#), including rest and [physical therapy](#). Baseline questionnaires, including the Kerlan-Jobe Shoulder and Elbow Score (KJOC Score) and Disability of the Arm, Shoulder, and Hand Score (DASH Score) were completed for each patient prior to the PRP injection. Each patient underwent a single PRP injection at the ulnar collateral ligament under ultrasound guidance.

At an average follow-up of 18 weeks (range 12-46 weeks), 16 of 17

athletes had returned to play. The average time to return to play was 10 weeks (range 8-12 weeks). The average KJOC Score improved from 47 to 93,  $p=.0001$ . The average DASH Score improved from 24 to 3,  $p=.003$ . The Sports Module of the DASH [questionnaire](#) improved from 74 to 6,  $p=.0001$ .

"There is little information in the literature regarding non-surgical treatment of UCL tears. Our results show that PRP may be an option to return players to the field without having to place them under the knife," said Crow.

Provided by American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine

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