

WHAT'S BETTER?

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PRP INJECTIONS VS. CORTISONE INJECTIONS – WHAT’S BETTER?

Before the creation of platelet-rich plasma therapy, physicians relied on cortisone injections to treat muscle and joint inflammation, as well as pain. Typically used for moderate to severe levels of pain, cortisone shots are a quick-fix solution that provides relief, albeit temporarily.

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With the inception of PRP therapy and treatments, pain sufferers now have more options to choose from. Both treatments are supposed to relieve pain so how do you choose? Is there a huge difference in what each injection offers in terms of short term and long term pain relief?

Both cortisone injections and platelet rich plasma therapy have the same goal, but goes about it in their own way. These are the distinctions between the two treatments, which can help you decide what may be right for you.

WHAT ARE CORTISONE INJECTIONS?

Cortisone injections are created from one key substance: corticosteroids. Yes, they're a form of steroids, and no, they won't get you suspended for half an MLB season if you're caught using them as they are not anabolic steroids.

They're used due to the extremely potent anti-inflammatory properties they possess, and are commonly recommended to patients who have severe joint pain. Like a PRP injection, cortisone is administered directly into the target tendon or joint that needs relief. With corticosteroids being as powerful as they are, physicians will limit the amount of injections a patient receives due to potential harmful side effects.

Cortisone injections provide instant gratification, and a quick-fix solution to problematic pain that is caused by inflammation. If someone is really suffering, they might not be able to wait the lengthier time for a PRP injection to kick in, opting for the faster alternative.

Corticosteroids are also more cost-efficient than substitutions like platelet rich plasma therapy, though that should be a minor consideration when it comes to personal health, if offered the luxury.

THE MAIN DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN PRP AND CORTISONE

There are a few vital differences between the two pain treatments, but maybe the most significant is cortisone injections provide temporary relief, while PRP therapy reduces pain and heals the injured area. PRP treatment



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has healing properties that spur cellular growth and tissue regeneration, slowly rebuilding the painful area over time. Cortisone shots merely mask the pain, albeit quicker than a PRP injection, but will do nothing to facilitate healing or repairs in the body.

In fact, cortisone shots shut down healing altogether. The two areas corticosteroids 'help' with pain and inflammation are elements that actually encourage the body to heal itself. Pain restricts movement, preventing further injury. Inflammation is the body's rallying call to stem cells and other growth factors to mend the targeted area.

The other concern with cortisone shots is they also prevent ligaments and joints from fully healing, resulting in the injury recurring several months down the road. There are some cases where they've caused nearby bones or ligaments to deteriorate due to the shots shutting down any healing in the general area.

As mentioned earlier, physicians must limit the amount of cortisone shots a body can take due to the healing prevention and deterioration of ligaments, cartilage, and joints. Thinning of the skin can also result.

PRP treatment, on the other hand, doesn't come with as many risks. Since PRP therapy uses a patient's own blood, it's very rare complications will arise during or post-injection process. The bioactive proteins in blood facilitate and manage healing too, meaning PRP provides both pain relief over time, and heals the damaged tissue in a two-birds-with-one-stone deal.

The downside of PRP therapy is the pain relief comes, well, painfully slow. Patients won't feel immediate effects like they will with cortisone shots, but they will four to six months down the line. By that point PRP treatments really shine. Not only will the benefits of pain relief be felt, but it'll be significantly more effective thanks to the healing properties of PRP. At the 12-month point, cortisone injections can't measure to PRP therapy in terms of pain relief or the long-term benefits to the body.

PRP treatment is also much costlier than regular cortisone injections, though some reimbursements can be offered from some insurance companies if it's been pre-authorized. Still, it can be seen as a long term investment for some patients, as PRP therapy is known to postpone, and even prevent, the need for potential surgeries. People who opt for cortisone injections OFTEN end up needing surgery for their ailment, either

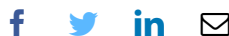
because the area has been denied the ability to heal, or from the damage and deterioration from the corticosteroids themselves.

While cortisone shots delivers that instant pain relief chronic pain sufferers may be longing for, PRP therapy ARE the better alternative in the long run. Thanks to the healing properties of PRP, patients can both find relief and long-term health benefits from this type of treatment.

To learn more about the PRP therapies we offer at our RegenerVate clinic, contact us today!

By RegenerVate | June 12th, 2016 | blog | 0 Comments

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