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Knee Surg Sports Traumatol Arthrosc. 2010 Apr;18(4):472-9. Epub 2009 Oct 17.

Platelet-rich plasma: intra-articular knee injections produced favorable results on degenerative cartilage lesions.

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Abstract

Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) is a natural concentrate of autologous blood growth factors experimented in different fields of medicine in order to test its potential to enhance tissue regeneration. The aim of our study is to explore this novel approach to treat degenerative lesions of articular cartilage of the knee. One hundred consecutive patients, affected by chronic degenerative condition of the knee, were treated with PRP intra-articular injections (115 knees treated). The procedure consisted of 150-ml of venous blood collected and twice centrifugated: 3 PRP units of 5 ml each were used for the injections. Patients were clinically prospectively evaluated before and at the end of the treatment, and at 6 and 12 months follow-up. IKDC, objective and subjective, and EQ VAS were used for clinical evaluation. Statistical analysis was performed to evaluate the significance of sex, age, grade of OA and BMI. A statistically significant improvement of all clinical scores was obtained from the basal evaluation to the end of the therapy and at 6-12 months follow-up ($P < 0.0005$). The results remained stable from the end of the therapy to 6 months follow up, whereas they became significantly worse at 12 months follow up ($P = 0.02$), even if still significantly higher respect to the basal level ($P < 0.0005$). The preliminary results indicate that the treatment with PRP injections is safe and has the potential to reduce pain and improve knee function and quality of life in younger patients with low degree of articular degeneration.

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