

# Stem Cell and PRP FAQs

## 1. How & why does it work?

There are two prominent schools of thought and some research to support each:

- Undifferentiated cells harvested from your bone marrow or blood stream become new cartilage cells.
- Bone Marrow Aspirate (BMA) and Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) contain signaling cells that recruit a regenerative response from your body when administered to the area to be treated.

## 2. Who is a candidate?

The short answer is, "We aren't sure yet." Most of the current research on orthopedic use of BMA is directed at answering this question.

## 3. What protocol do you follow as far as timeline with BMA or PRP?

I recommend a single injection of BMA followed 4-6 weeks later by an injection of PRP. There are also recent studies showing relief of pain from knee arthritis with a series of 3 PRP injections, so I have made that treatment available to patients as well.

## 4. What is the actual procedure for BMA and or PRP?

### **BMA therapy (in the hospital):**

After light sedation is given, about 150mL of bone marrow is aspirated from the iliac crest and prepared for injection (centrifuged and separated) using the Arthrex Angel system (see Arthrex.com). The aspirate is then injected into the area to be treated.

### **PRP therapy (in clinic):**

About 90mL of venous blood is drawn and prepared (centrifuged and separated) using the Arthrex Angel system and injected into the area to be treated.

## 5. Does insurance pay for it?

No, unfortunately at this time insurance companies still view it as investigational so it is a non-covered procedure.

## 6. Will my initial evaluation be covered by insurance?

Yes, your initial evaluation can be filed with your insurance and your normal insurance benefits will apply.

## 7. What is the cost range?

BMA 1 site: \$4000  
PRP 1 site: \$1150

## 8. Does it grow cartilage?

Human research is not conclusive, but we have seen encouraging results with cartilage regeneration in animal models. The human studies to date have indicated that these therapies are safe and some patients receive pain relief.