



# Santiam Community Health

serving the Willamette Valley

CLASSES • WORKSHOPS • MEDICAL SERVICES

## Regenerative Injection Therapies Pre and Post Injection Care

### Pre-Procedure Care:

1. Prior to your injection procedure, you must review all medications you are taking with Dr. Cortal so that we can check for potential interactions with your scheduled procedure.
  - a. NSAIDs and steroid anti-inflammatories should be avoided starting 7 days pre-procedure and ideally continually avoided due to negative long-term effects to connective tissue (joints, cartilage).
  - b. Blood-thinning meds such as Warfarin/Coumadin and Xarelto can interact with RIT procedures, causing prolonged bleeding and slow healing times.
  - c. With extremely sensitive patients or those prone to severe anxiety, we can create a plan to minimize discomfort.
2. Hygiene- wash the area the day of with soap and water. Do not apply lotions nor any other topical items to the treatment area.
3. Depending on the body region and extent of the treatment, you may want to arrange a ride home- particularly if you are sensitive to medical treatments in general and/or are getting an extensive number of treatments, particularly in the spine, hip, knee or ankle regions (which may make it difficult to drive).

### Post Procedure Care:

1. Hygiene: wait until the day after the procedure to shower. *Avoid any water submersion* (bath, hot tub) for *48 hours*.
2. *Take a break!* Rest, recuperate and allow any discomfort and tenderness or mild swelling to subside. But get gentle activity in early (such as walking and non-exertional physical activity within two days), and resume your normal work and daily activities (that are not too physical or aggravating) within a week after the injections.
  - a. *Mild to moderate tenderness, swelling, discomfort and even aggravation of your complaint is very normal and to be expected with prolotherapy.* As we are literally signaling the body to regenerate the healing process, this can involve some swelling and temporary inflammation, which can come on all at once or in periodic waves.
  - b. *Signs that you should get urgent care treatment:* Prolonged joint swelling that worsens and lasts over 1 week; fever, chills, sweating (feeling sick in general), headache, redness and/or heat occurring with the swelling. Do not wait for a return visit, this may be a rare case of infection and needs to be treated right away in urgent care or at the ER.
  - c. Return to physical activity/sports: Discuss this with Dr. Cortal as the timing depends on what your activity and injury history was as well as what type and extent of injection therapy.
3. Doctor contact info:
  - a. If there is something specific about your treatment plan that you do not understand, or would like clarification on, make sure to address these at your re-evaluation. Please, no unsolicited updates or requests for additional care/ treatment recommendations (that's what appointments are for).

Schedule your re-evaluation and/or follow-up prolotherapy treatment by using the online patient portal or by emailing [santiamhealth@gmail.com](mailto:santiamhealth@gmail.com).

- b. For after-hours emergent concerns, Dr. Cortal's after-hours secure voicemail number is 503-380-5833. If you are calling, it is because we need to imminently decide where to triage your concern (urgent care vs ER), and you cannot wait until the next available appointment. Again, please no unsolicited updates or requests for additional care/ treatment recommendations.
4. Foundations of health to support healing and repair – can be started at any time with guidance from your Naturopathic Doctor; you don't have to wait until after the procedure to start these:
- a. Adequate hydration, adequate sleep, stress reduction
  - b. Adequate nutrition, with incorporation of a whole-foods-based low carb diet and abstaining from known or suspected food allergens/ intolerances.
  - c. Adequate hormone balance (including sex hormone, adrenal and thyroid function)
  - d. Adequate levels of vitamin and mineral balance
  - e. Glucosamine sulfate (Thorne brand preferred) at 3 capsules twice daily can stimulate connective tissue healing and recovery.
  - f. Other nutrients which can be helpful for ligament, tendon and joint repair: Vitamin C, zinc and collagen/gelatin (such as Great Lakes' Collagen Hydrosylate or Collagen sub-types specific for you)
  - g. Strengthening and conditioning, using proper functional movement, working within your safe limits and being aware of your unique fitness goals and functional challenges (ask for referrals). Joints, muscles, tendons and ligaments will only naturally grow as strong as the signals they receive from the body (i.e. If you never ask them to be strong, they will be weak).
5. If you need to take the edge off uncomfortable swelling and discomfort immediately after the injections (particularly if it is interfering with sleep and normal functioning), look to natural anti-inflammatories, **not NSAIDs** (Aspirin, Advil/Ibuprofen, Aleve/Naproxen, etc though Tylenol is ok for temporary use). NSAIDs will do more harm than good for your healing process. Instead, prior to your procedure, discuss oral natural anti-inflammatories such as fish oil and curcumin, that won't dampen the healing response that you're wanting to promote.
- a. Massage and/or chiropractic may be used prior to or after the injection therapy.
  - b. Alternating hydrotherapy is a great supportive home remedy.
  - c. Bioavailable curcumin, such as Curcumasorb.
  - d. Cannabinoid compounds (such as CBD products, oils) do not interfere at all with our procedures.

#### **Expectations of Benefit/ Timeline of Improvement:**

Changes in pain, strength, stability and mobility may be noted immediately, a few days later or cumulative over weeks. *The full therapeutic affect builds over 3-4 weeks*, depending on the health and integrity of the body structure we are working on. Effects of a course of treatment are cumulative, with subsequent prolotherapy sessions building on prior gains. Severe cases may need multiple treatments to see a noticeable effect.

#### **When another session is indicated:**

Depending on the procedure, some are more commonly done in a series than are others. The number of sessions may be 1-3 for a mild to moderate issue, or more if there is a severe level of injury and degeneration. The first procedure is our "trial," to see initially what effect it has on pain, swelling, instability and immobility. Three prolotherapy appointments are often an initial treatment course for a typical moderate level chronic condition. Six prolotherapy sessions may be needed for full stability and or strengthening of a severe and chronic degenerative joint disease (such as severe OA of the knees). All courses of care are all individualized.

Some clues that you are due for a 'tune-up' or repeat session are that we see the initial symptom/pain/mobility improvement of 75% or greater that has since backslid to only 50% or less, or a recent injury, trauma or overuse injury (or further repetitive motion damage) has re-aggravated your pain/concerns.