Longridge Vets

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) for Dogs

An owner's guide to treatment, recovery and expected outcomes

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Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) for Dogs

PRP is a treatment made from your pet's own blood. We take a blood sample, concentrate the platelets, then inject the resulting plasma into a targeted area.

The aim is for the PRP to stimulate your pet's own biology into healing the tendon, bone, joint or other tissue.

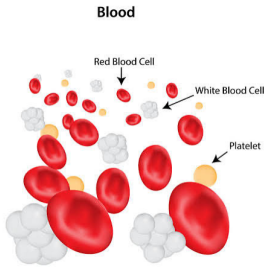
What is PRP?



Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) is made from a sample of your pet's own blood. The blood is processed in a special piece of equipment. The platelets are separated and concentrated in a small volume of plasma. The platelets can then release growth factors and other biologically active substances at the treatment site.

Think of platelets as tiny 'first responders'. When tissue is injured, platelets help coordinate the early stages of healing. PRP aims to place a concentrated amount of these signals exactly where they may be useful.

Platelets contain signalling proteins that may help regulate inflammation and support the body's natural repair processes. PRP is not a cure-all, and the strength of evidence varies by condition.



What might PRP help with?

Tendon injuries

PRP may support the body's repair response and may improve comfort and function during rehabilitation in some patients.

Joint disease/osteoarthritis

PRP may reduce pain and improve mobility in some dogs, potentially for weeks to months, but responses vary.

PRP is generally considered an adjunct to a broader treatment plan rather than a replacement for appropriate diagnosis, rehabilitation, weight management, pain control or surgery when those are indicated.

How is the treatment done?

Discussion with our vet

One of our vets will examine your pet and review the diagnosis, imaging and overall health to decide whether PRP is a reasonable option. If you decide that you are happy to proceed, we will book an admission appointment on a convenient day.

On the Day

You'll bring your dog in starved after dinner the night before. They are ok to have water until they come in. A vet will check you are happy with the plan and provide. You'll leave your dog with us. We will then contact you later in the day when they are ready to be collected.

The Procedure

1. **Sedation**
   Firstly, we sedate your dog so that they are quiet and calm.

2. **Blood sample**
   A sample of blood is taken from your pet, in much the same way as a routine blood sample.
3. **Processing**
   The blood is processed using a modern specialist centrifuge/system designed to separate and concentrate the desired components. We prepare the PRP type appropriate to the treatment site.
4. **Injection**
   The targeted area is shaved and thoroughly cleaned. The PRP is injected into the target area.

Recovery and rehabilitation

Your pet's activity is usually adjusted after treatment. A gradual, condition-specific rehabilitation programme is important because PRP is intended to work alongside controlled loading and rehabilitation, rather than replace them. The nurse will explain, on discharge, if any new medication is required.

Review

We monitor comfort, mobility and function over time and adjust the wider treatment plan according to your pet's response.

What should I expect afterwards?

- Some pets improve gradually rather than immediately.
- A short period of increased soreness, stiffness or lameness can occur after an injection.
- The timing and degree of improvement vary considerably between patients and conditions.
- PRP does not rebuild a severely damaged tendon or reverse established arthritis on its own. The aim is to support healing and/or improve comfort and function.
- Follow the activity and medication instructions provided by your veterinary team. Do not change prescribed medication without discussing it with us first.

Different types of PRP

PRP is not one single product. The number of platelets, the amount of white blood cells (leukocytes), the final volume and the way the product is prepared can all vary. These differences matter because different tissues may respond differently. At Longridge Vets, we have invested in a piece of equipment that enables us to produce PRP with varying properties specifically for your pet.

Important: 'leukocyte-rich' and 'leukocyte-lower' describe the composition of the PRP; they do not guarantee a particular clinical result. Current veterinary research has not established an optimal PRP recipe for every tendon or every joint.

What are the risks?

PRP uses your pet's own blood, so the risk of an immune reaction is generally low. However, PRP is still an injection/procedure and is not risk-free.

- Temporary pain, stiffness, swelling or increased lameness at the injection site.
- Bleeding or bruising, particularly at the blood-draw or injection site.
- Infection, although this is uncommon when appropriate sterile/aseptic technique is used.
- Joint inflammation (synovitis) after an intra-articular injection; this is usually temporary but should be assessed if marked or persistent.
- Sedation or anaesthetic risks if sedation/anaesthesia is needed for safe positioning or treatment.
- Failure to improve, or improvement that is smaller or shorter-lived than hoped.
- The underlying tendon or joint problem may continue to progress despite treatment.

- Rare complications can occur with any injection, including damage to nearby structures. The specific risks depend on the body area being treated.

When might PRP not be appropriate?

- When the underlying diagnosis is uncertain or the condition needs a different treatment first.
- When there is an active infection at or near the intended injection site.
- When your pet's overall health or blood-related condition makes blood collection or the procedure unsuitable.
- When the expected benefit is unlikely to justify the procedure, cost or recovery requirements.

We will discuss your pet's individual circumstances, alternatives and expected rehabilitation requirements before treatment.



What we know: The research

The evidence base for veterinary PRP is evolving.

- PRP contains platelets and biologically active molecules that can influence inflammation, cell behaviour and tissue repair.
- Studies have shown potential improvements in pain and function for dogs with joint pain.
- For tendon and ligament injuries, veterinary evidence is promising but inconsistent and mainly involves horses.

What we don't know: The research

- Exactly which PRP formulation is best for every individual condition.
- The ideal platelet concentration and leukocyte concentration for every tissue.
- How many injections are best, and exactly how far apart they should be, for every condition.
- How long any benefit will last in an individual pet.
- Whether PRP changes the long-term course of osteoarthritis or tendon disease, rather than mainly improving pain and function.
- Which patients will respond particularly well and which will not.
- How PRP compares directly with every other treatment option in well-designed, blinded clinical trials.

A balanced way to think about PRP

Potential advantages	Important limitations
• Uses the patient's own blood. • Can be prepared and used at one sitting. • Provides a concentrated source of platelet-derived signalling molecules. • May improve comfort and function in selected patients. • Can clinically see some promising results. • Can be incorporated into a wider plan.	• Not every patient responds. • Evidence quality varies by condition and study. • PRP products differ substantially between systems and protocols. • It is not a guaranteed 'regenerative cure'. • Long-term benefits and the optimal recipe are still being studied.

Frequently asked questions

Will PRP cure my pet's arthritis?

No. Osteoarthritis is a chronic, progressive condition. PRP may reduce pain and improve function in some patients, but it should be viewed as one part of a multimodal management plan rather than a cure.

Is PRP the same as stem-cell therapy?
No. PRP is made from blood and is rich in platelets and platelet-derived signalling molecules. Stem-cell therapies involve living cells with different biological properties.

Does PRP work immediately?
Not necessarily. Some animals improve over the following days or weeks, and tendon treatment in particular may require a structured rehabilitation period before the benefit can be judged.

Can my pet have other treatments at the same time?
Often yes, but the combination needs to be planned. Our vets will advise you about medications and treatments around the time of PRP.

If you are interested and would like to discuss this with a vet, please call us on 01772783327.

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