



Boulder Biologics

Integrative and Regenerative Medicine

Post-Procedure Care after Stem Cell Treatment

After the procedure:

- It is normal to have mild to moderate pain in the area of where stem cells were harvested from the patient. This will be over the posterior pelvis (PSIS) where bone marrow was taken, and over the flank/abdominal area where adipose was harvested. Post-procedure infection is quite rare, but we ask the patient to be vigilant and report any fevers, chills, skin redness and or worsening pain. If infection were to occur, it will typically present at least 72 hours after the procedure.
- If your procedure included stem cells from adipose tissue, it is normal to expect pain at the site of your stem cell treatment (joint/tendon/ligament). This is due to inflammatory responses from the fat cells that were injected into the locations. This discomfort may last from 1-2 weeks after your procedure and for some, will necessitate the use of non-NSAID oral pain medications.
- We will typically consider the use of bracing and or short-term minimal weight bearing with crutches for many of the stem cell procedures. This is to ensure that the areas of injury that we are targeting with treatment, will have minimal impact stresses and ensure optimal stem cell viability.
- We advise the avoidance of non-steroidal anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen (Motrin), Naprosyn (Aleve) and aspirin for 6-8 weeks after the procedure. This is to ensure we are not suppressing the initial healing responses that are important in maximizing treatment benefits.
- Relative rest and periodic elevation of the treated area for 48 hours after the procedure are recommended. We do encourage patients to still move around in non-impactful ways during this time period, to avoid any potential risk of deep vein thrombosis. We will typically discourage the use of ice in the initial days after treatment to maintain optimal physiologic temperatures for stem cell function.

- In the absence of any contra-indications, we will give patients post-procedure pain medications that do not alter the healing response, such as Vicodin or Percocet, to help alleviate pain.
- Patients may remove larger dressings that were applied to harvest sites and stem cell injection sites 24-48 hours later. We will typically use Steri-strips for the harvest site on the posterior hip and flank/abdominal area. These should be left in place and will normally fall off within 10-14 days on their own. Patients may remove them if they are still in place at 14 days.
- You may shower 24 hours after your procedure and avoid any scrubbing to the area of the injection and or harvest sites. We advise patients to avoid any public pools or hot tubs for 48-72 hours to minimize infection risk.
- We will normally have patients return to the clinic 2 weeks after the procedure for wound checks and for follow-up to ensure everything is progressing normally. For patients that have come from out of town for the procedure, we will normally try and arrange for a phone consultation at that two-week interval. We will have the patient take pictures of the harvest and injection sites to ensure there are no concerns.
- The goal with stem cells is to create healing in the targeted tissues and physical therapy and appropriate mobility activities play an important role in this process. We will typically encourage gentle minimal resistance cycling to ensure motion in treated joints, and encourage optimal cartilage distribution that is very similar to post-op micro-fracture protocols. We will give you a physical therapy prescription at your stem cell visit or before. We typically try to start within one week after your procedure and advise booking PT visits well in advance.
- Be prepared to avoid impact and torsional activities on joints and or other treated tissue for 6 weeks after your procedure. The healing tissues are fragile in the short-term and avoidance of excessive stress on them is very important.
- We encourage patients to remain patient after stem cell treatment as the healing process will normally take 6 months to evolve.