

PAINNEWS

SOUTHWEST SPINE & PAIN CENTER NEWS

PRP INJECTIONS
& STEM CELL THERAPY:
NOT JUST FOR ATHLETES

**ALCOHOL &
FIBROMYALGIA**

DON'T MIX!

REDUCING CHRONIC PAIN
AFTER A SHINGLES OUTBREAK

ALCOHOL & FIBROMYALGIA DON'T MIX!



Drinking alcohol before or after taking pain medication is a well-known danger that can lead to several mental and physical health problems.

Unfortunately, a growing number of fibromyalgia patients either don't know the risks associated with mixing pain medication and alcohol, or they're using the two as a coping mechanism for their pain.

Researchers at Boston University studied nearly 600 people who suffered from drug abuse or illicit drug use, and 87% of those individuals reported having chronic pain. The results from the study can be seen below:

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- **81% of the 121 people who said they misused prescription opioid painkillers reportedly did so to treat their pain.**
 - **Of the 265 patients who reported heavy drinking in the past three months, 38% said they were self-medicating their pain symptoms.**
 - **79% of patients determined to be high-risk drinkers were self-medicating their fibromyalgia pain.**
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The pain and spine care specialists at Southwest Spine & Pain Center understand living with chronic pain cannot be easy, but our team also wants patients to consume alcohol responsibly. Using alcohol as a method for controlling pain is incredibly dangerous, and the physicians at Southwest Spine & Pain Center are here to tell you why.

Alcohol to Relieve Pain? Here Are the Risks

Alcohol can provide a very mild amount of pain relief, primarily because it affects the central nervous system and numbs pain receptors. However, alcohol has no direct pain-relieving value and can actually cause more harm than good when consumed in excessive amounts. Moreover, serious health complications can occur when alcohol is consumed in conjunction with powerful opioid pain medication.

Drinking alcohol while taking prescription pain medication significantly increases your risk of developing stomach ulcers, intestinal bleeding, and extensive liver issues like cirrhosis or liver cancer. Immediate side effects can include nausea, vomiting, a lower heart rate and breathing, and overdose or death.

Contrary to popular belief, alcohol disrupts normal sleep cycles, especially when it's consumed an hour before going to bed. Because chronic pain already makes sleeping difficult, adding alcohol into the mix can further complicate this process. With poor sleep comes increased pain, irritability, discomfort, and fatigue.

Of course, drinking in moderation is the key to decreasing your risk of some of these outcomes. Take a moment to discuss your alcohol consumption and medication intake with a Southwest Spine & Pain Center physician today.

PRP INJECTIONS & STEM CELL THERAPY

NOT JUST FOR ATHLETES!

Utah's cooler weather signifies the beginning of the holidays and another highly anticipated time of year: football season! NFL players put their bodies through a lot; in fact, various studies have found that the anatomy of a tackle or hit is like being in a moderate to severe car accident.

Can you imagine experiencing the repercussions of a car accident a few times a week? It's a frightening thing to consider, but fortunately, these athletes have interventional and alternative treatment options available to them so they can deal with some of the pain.

One such therapy is called regenerative medicine, and it often includes platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections and stem cell treatment. Both treatment modalities are currently used by NFL players, including several members of the Seattle Seahawks. According to Football Insiders, the Seahawks were one of the NFL's healthiest teams last season, ranking 5th out of 32 teams overall.

While there are many factors that could have attributed to this, many of the players went on record saying they believed regenerative medicine made a big difference in their pain, injuries, and performance. So, why are we bringing this up? The team at Southwest Spine & Pain Center is pleased to announce that PRP injections and stem cell therapy are no longer exclusively available to athletes! Moreover, we've been offering this treatment option for many years now.



Benefits of Regenerative Medicine

PRP injection therapy and stem cell therapy are non-surgical treatments that facilitate the restoration of injured tendons, ligaments, muscles, and joints with the use of the patient's own blood or bone marrow.

For PRP injections, a physician uses the patient's own blood to separate platelets in a centrifuge. The platelets are then re-injected into the injured area, releasing growth factors that promote natural tissue healing. Stem cell therapy is a completely different process that extracts stem cells from either bone marrow or fat tissue. Stem cells from bone marrow, called autologous mesenchymal, produce cartilage and are typically used in treating arthritic conditions and sports injuries. Stem cells from fat tissue are utilized with platelets to heal an osteoarthritic joint, for example, to regrow cartilage.

To learn more about regenerative medicine, talk to your Southwest Spine & Pain Center physician today. We offer PRP injection therapy at all our locations, so patients who are interested in this treatment can be evaluated and examined for eligibility.



REDUCING CHRONIC PAIN AFTER A SHINGLES OUTBREAK

Postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) is a condition that arises after a patient's shingles virus has cleared. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), roughly 1 in 5 people who develop the shingles virus will get PHN.

While there is little that can be done to reduce your risk of the shingles virus (1 in 3 people will develop this ailment in their lifetime), there are a few steps you can take to minimize your likelihood of developing chronic pain after a shingles outbreak. Consider the following steps:

TALK TO YOUR SOUTHWEST SPINE & PAIN CENTER PHYSICIAN.

He can recommend an evidence-based treatment approach to reduce your risk of developing PHN. Treatment may include a combination of medications and creams, such as tricyclic antidepressants, gabapentin, lidocaine patch 5%, and opioid analgesics.

FOLLOW YOUR TREATMENT REGIMEN TO A "T."

If you are prescribed certain medications, be sure to take them at the frequency and dosage that has been prescribed by your SWSP physician. Missing doses or taking more than the approved dosage can negatively impact your post-treatment outcomes.

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS MAY BE NECESSARY.

If these first and second-line therapies do not provide the desired results, it's imperative you talk to your SWSP physician about alternative therapies, such as acupuncture, biofeedback, and mind-body techniques. Moreover, interventional therapies may be recommended to minimize PHN.

IF YOU'RE SUFFERING FROM CHRONIC PAIN DUE TO SHINGLES OR A PRE-EXISTING CONDITION OR INJURY, TALK TO A PAIN AND SPINE CARE SPECIALIST AT SOUTHWEST SPINE AND PAIN CENTER TODAY!

SOUTHWEST
SPINE & PAIN CENTER
435.656.2424 | SouthWestSpineandPain.com

SUNSET
2107 W. Sunset Blvd. Suite 102
St. George, Utah 84770
t: 435.619.8630
f: 435.619.8634

LOGAN
630 E. 1400 N. Suite 135
Logan, UT 84341
t: 435.787.8146
f: 435.787.8149

MT. PLEASANT
1100 S. Medical Dr.
Mount Pleasant, UT 84647
t: 435.986.7156
f: 435.986.7160

ST. GEORGE
652 S. Medical Center Dr. #110
St. George, Utah 84790
t: 435.656.2424
f: 435.656.2828

HURRICANE
25 N. 2000 W. Suite 8
Hurricane, UT 84737
t: 435.635.0174
f: 435.635.0631

CEDAR CITY
1303 N. Main St.
Cedar City, Utah 84721
t: 435.586.2229
f: 435.586.2022

RICHFIELD
1000 N. Main Suite 2C
Richfield, Utah 84701
t: 435.986.7156
f: 435.986.7160

PROVO
320 W. River Park Dr., #255
Provo, UT 84604
t: 385.203.0246
f: 385.203.0245