

# PAINNEWS

SOUTHWEST SPINE & PAIN CENTER NEWS

## STEM CELL INJECTIONS FOR JOINT PAIN

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KEEP MOVING ON YOUR  
**NEW YEAR'S EXERCISE  
RESOLUTIONS!**

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**NEW WELLNESS CENTER**  
HELPS PATIENTS DEAL  
WITH PAIN DISORDERS

# STEM CELL INJECTIONS FOR JOINT PAIN



## **What if the solution to your achy joints lies in your own bone marrow? That's what some patients are finding with stem cell therapy.**

Although research is continuing, several studies have found that stem cell injections are a safe way to help ease the pain of knee injuries and osteoarthritis.

At Southwest Spine and Pain Center, we have seen good success using stem cell therapy as an alternative to surgery for musculoskeletal conditions that have stopped responding to traditional therapies. We recently treated a patient who tore cartilage in his knee playing basketball in his 20s and found his pain getting worse as the years went by. He came in hoping to avoid knee replacement surgery and was treated with a stem cell injection.

**“Within a couple of weeks, I was pain-free in the right knee,” the patient said. “Before that, I would need to take at least a couple of Advil to sleep at night because it would just throb ... I’m feeling 90 percent to 100 percent better than I was before.”**

This innovative treatment uses the body's stem cells to repair and regenerate damaged tissue. When these cells are administered to areas of pain, they produce more cells, promoting healing and tissue repair. While research on the treatment is ongoing, it has shown the most benefit for those suffering chronic pain from degenerative disc disease, anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) tears, tennis elbow, golf elbow, arthritis, and other similar conditions. Stem cells used in treatment can come through the patient's bone marrow or through allograft tissue.

## **Stem Cells from Bone Marrow**

Bone marrow, which has a high concentration of stem cells, is harvested from the patient and reinjected into the body at the site of pain and degeneration. The intention is that the bone marrow will repair and rebuild the skeletal structures to improve pain and strengthen the damaged area.

The treatment is not complicated. It includes an injection that prepares the area for the stem cell procedure. Bone marrow will be harvested from the hip area, prepared for reinjection, and then will be injected into the area of pain or injury. A follow-up treatment of platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy to the site of pain to "activate" the treatment may also help with healing and pain relief.

## **Stem Cells from Allograft Tissue**

Living, healthy donors may donate stem cells from placental tissue following a full-term pregnancy and scheduled Caesarean section. This form of stem cell therapy does not use stem cells from embryonic tissue. The stem cells from allograft tissue are minimally processed and preserved to maintain the integrity of the placental tissue and have been shown to support healing, reduction of inflammation, and soft tissue repair.

**Talk to your Southwest Spine and Pain Center doctor about whether stem cell injections might be an option for you.**

# KEEP MOVING ON YOUR NEW YEAR'S EXERCISE RESOLUTION



If one of your New Year's resolutions was to exercise more, here's some motivation to help keep you on track: Exercise may help manage chronic pain.

We know that exercise helps with depression and stress. And if you're able to control those twin demons, you'll likely find it easier to cope with pain. If you already have injuries, though, be careful not to make them worse. Be sure to get your doctor's approval before you start any exercise program. Some good options to try, even if you suffer chronic pain, include:

**Swimming.** Exercising in water is always a good bet because there's no weight on your joints. Whether you're swimming laps or taking a water aerobics class, something about being in the water seems to just wash stress away.

**Walking.** This is a great option for many people because it's relatively low impact and can be done almost anywhere. Make sure you wear sturdy shoes that fit well. To bump up the benefit, try alternating between a moderate pace and a few minutes of walking as fast as you can. In bad weather, you can switch to an indoor treadmill or elliptical trainer.

**Biking.** Biking can be a great way to build up the muscles that support your knees, and you can use a stationary bike at a gym during bad weather. Just be sure your bike seat is positioned correctly. Adjust the seat height so that when you extend your leg to pedal down, the leg is almost but not completely straight. If you start to develop any pain while biking, consider taking your bike to a shop that does professional fittings to see if it's adjusted correctly to fit your body.

**Yoga.** This can be a wonderful, stress-reducing choice as long as you choose a class that's appropriate for your abilities. Don't feel pressured to do anything that hurts. If you need to lie in child pose on your mat while everyone else is doing headstands, that's fine.

**Pilates.** Pilates is a great choice for strengthening the core, which helps prevent back pain. Be sure to work with a qualified teacher who is willing to help you modify any exercises that could aggravate existing injuries.

**Strength Training.** Most of us can benefit from strength training because strong muscles help support our joints—and our self-esteem. Start with light weights and don't push yourself too quickly. It's a good idea to start out working with a trainer to be sure you're using good form so that you don't hurt yourself.

**Tai Chi.** A form of martial arts that combines gentle physical movement with mindfulness meditation, tai chi can be done by people of all ages. At least one study showed that a fibromyalgia patient group practicing tai chi saw a greater decrease in pain, better sleep, and fewer episodes of depression than an alternate group attending classes on stretching and wellness education.

**So keep at that New Year's resolution. With so many options for exercise, you can find a routine that helps you feel less stressed and better able to cope with pain.**



# NEW WELLNESS CENTER HELPS PATIENTS DEAL WITH PAIN DISORDERS

**We are pleased to announce the opening of Southwest Healing & Wellness Center, an organization whose mission is to prevent and treat opiate use disorder while helping patients cope with pain conditions.**

The center, which opened in January, incorporates principles of wellness, mental health, relational health, physical health, and spiritual well-being to help participants manage their pain and their lives in a more functional and fulfilling manner.

The center's main office is in St. George, where day treatment and other services are provided. In addition, some services are offered in Logan, Provo, Richfield, and Cedar City. We are also able to use HIPAA-compliant telemedicine to offer outpatient service across the state.

The treatment team includes Laurie McBride, a licensed social worker, and Alberto Souza, a family nurse practitioner. McBride, who has a master's degree in social work from the University of Utah, specializes in recovery from trauma, substance dependency/recovery support, and emotional and life balance. Souza, who has a master's degree in nursing from Frontier Nursing University, is fluent in English, Portuguese, and Spanish. He is currently pursuing further certification in psychiatry and mental health in order to provide his patients with the most up-to-date services and treatments in the field.

Based on the level of care needed, Southwest Healing & Wellness Center offers the following clinical services:

- Day Treatment Program
- Intensive Outpatient Program
- Outpatient Screening and Evaluations

## DAY TREATMENT PROGRAM

The one- to three-month Day Treatment Program is designed for adult men and women who are challenged by a pain condition and struggle with opiate use disorder. The program typically runs from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Both this program and the Intensive Outpatient Program described below include individual and group counseling along with couple and family counseling as needed.

Participants will engage in various services designed to improve pain management, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, fitness and nutrition programs, yoga, and massage.

## INTENSIVE OUTPATIENT PROGRAM

After recovery, participants transition to the 60- to 90-day Intensive Outpatient Program, which typically includes three hours of treatment three days per week, with sessions offered in the mornings, afternoons, or evenings. From there, clients transition to support groups and outpatient counseling as needed.

## OUTPATIENT SCREENING AND EVALUATIONS

The center offers a comprehensive screening tool along with a biopsychosocial evaluation in order to determine risk for opiate use disorder, behavioral health risks, mental health risks, and substance abuse risk in general. Evaluations are designed to determine appropriate levels of care.

*Other programs offered include:*

- Psychological and psychiatric care and testing
- Outpatient counseling (individual, couple, and family).
- Outpatient coaching (life, career, education, financial, and relational)
- Support groups

**SOUTHWEST**  
SPINE & PAIN CENTER

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