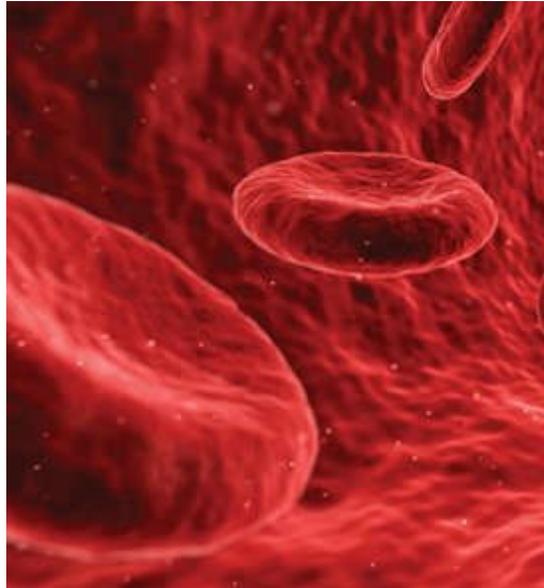


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# Understanding Bioidentical Hormones and Platelet Rich Plasma Treatments

BY GERT WALTER



**L**ately there has been a lot of interest in platelet rich plasma (PRP). PRP can be used to improve joint function (originally developed by orthopedists 20 years ago), to stop urinary incontinence in women (very high success rate), improve sexual pleasure and function in men and women, and rejuvenate the skin of the aging face and other places. These treatments include the trademarked Vampire Facial and Face Lift, the O-Shot, the Priapus Shot and others.

PRP is obtained from drawing the patient's blood, then processing the blood specifically to concentrate the platelets and filter out red blood cells and most of the white blood cells. The remaining PRP contains concentrated platelets, monocytes and a bit of plasma, which is then re-injected into the desired area. The platelets are an important part of the normal healing cascade that gets activated with any injury. They release multiple growth factors, which in turn draw in stem cells to rejuvenate the treated area.

For those interested in this procedure, it can be confusing to select the right system for producing the PRP. Independent research shows that many PRP systems either don't really concentrate the platelets, omit other important cells or are too concentrated. The provider should be able to provide patients with literature and unbiased scientific studies that support the product they are using.

Bioidentical hormone replacement therapy (BHRT) is very different, but provides some of the same benefits. BHRT, provided in pellet form, has been available for more than 75 years. It certainly improves libido and sexual function, but also helps with brain fog, joint aches, sleep, moods and much more if done correctly.

Most importantly, hormone supplementation should be bioidentical, meaning the molecule given to individuals is the same as what they already have in their body. Synthetic hormones (oral contraceptives, Premarin, Prempro, anabolic steroid shots, etc.) are chemically and functionally different than what is in the body, and can produce very different

effects. For instance, bioidentical hormones don't prevent pregnancy, but synthetics can. Also, the bad effects found in the Women's Health Initiative (more strokes, heart attacks, blood clots, breast cancer), are from synthetic hormones. Be sure to find a doctor that truly understands the difference, otherwise one could miss out on the benefits that hormones can provide for improved health and well-being.

When determining whether PRP or bioidentical hormones are a fit, understand that it really isn't an either/ or choice. PRP is great for specifically targeting something that bothers you (urinary incontinence, painful knee joint, decreased vaginal sensation, trouble with erections, etc.) After one to three initial treatments, people usually continue once a year.

On the other hand, BHRT by pellet therapy (by far the best way to get consistent and appropriate levels of hormones) is administered two to four times per year. This helps with the above, but also increases bone health, improves sleep, relieves brain fog, anxiety and mood swings and much more. It's even better is to combine the two treatments for enhanced results.

*Dr. Gert Walter is a physician who co-owns Medical Aesthetics of New England, PC, 274-2A Great Rd., Acton. The Medical Spa provides both PRP, bioidentical hormones and many other services. For consultations available daily or to find out more about these important treatments, call 978-263- 1406 or visit [MedicalAestheticsNE.com](http://MedicalAestheticsNE.com).*