

PRF Applications in Endodontics



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Berlin | Chicago | Tokyo
Barcelona | London | Milan | Mexico City | Moscow | Paris | Prague | Seoul | Warsaw
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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Sabeti, Mohammad (Mike) A., editor. | Lee, Edward S., editor. | Torabinejad, Mahmoud, editor.

Title: PRF applications in endodontics / edited by Mohammad Sabeti, Edward S. Lee, Mahmoud Torabinejad.

Description: Batavia, IL : Quintessence Publishing Co., Inc., [2020] | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "This handbook will help clinicians understand and use PRF in endodontics by discussing the science, clinical applications, and techniques for specialists and general practitioners"-- Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020002529 (print) | LCCN 2020002530 (ebook) | ISBN 9780867158274 (paperback) | ISBN 9781647240196 (epub)

Subjects: MESH: Dental Materials--chemical synthesis | Platelet-Rich Fibrin | Regenerative Endodontics methods

Classification: LCC RK652.5 (print) | LCC RK652.5 (ebook) | NLM WU 190 | DDC 617.6/95--dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020002529>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020002530>



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Quintessence Publishing Co, Inc
411 N Raddant Road
Batavia, IL 60510
www.quintpub.com

5 4 3 2 1

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Editor: Marieke Zaffron
Editorial Assistant: Samantha Smith
Design: Sue Zubek
Production: Sue Robinson

Printed in the United States



I dedicate this book to my wife, Parvin, and my children, Sara and Ali, with love.

–MS

I would like to thank my mentors, Dr Ronald J. Nicholson and Dr Chutima Mangkornkarn for inspiring me to become a better clinician and person, and to Dr Calvin Tae Nam for sharing his knowledge about PRF.

–ESL

To the soul of my dear father whom we lost to cancer early in his and our lives.

–MT

Contents



Foreword by Richard J. Miron viii
Preface x
Contributors xi
Introduction by Mahmoud Torabinejad xii

- 1 **Stem Cells in Regenerative Medicine** 1
C. Cameron Taylor | Habib Torfi | Mohammad Sabeti

- 2 **History, Science, Armamentarium, and How to Make PRF** 9
Edward S. Lee

- 3 **Nonsurgical Application: PRF for Regeneration Endodontics** 17
Mohammad Sabeti | Edward S. Lee

- 4 **Soft Tissue Applications** 25
Kayvon Javid | Gregori M. Kurtzman | Carlos Fernando Mourão

- 5 **Hard Tissue Applications** 39
Kayvon Javid | Gregori M. Kurtzman | Carlos Fernando Mourão
- 6 **PRF in Endodontic Surgery** 57
Mohammad Sabeti | Gregori M. Kurtzman
Edward S. Lee | Eric Wong
- 7 **PRF for Socket Preservation** 71
Yogalakshmi Rajendran | Yvonne Kapila

Index 77

Foreword



The use of platelet-rich fibrin (PRF) has seen a rapid increase over the past decade, owing to its ability to rapidly release autologous growth factors harvested quite easily from peripheral blood. While original case studies dating back nearly two decades focused primarily on its use in medicine for the treatment of hard-to-heal wound ulcers, it is now well known that its inclusion of high concentrations of platelets and leukocytes has served several benefits in dentistry. Specifically, platelets are largely responsible for the release of various regenerative growth factors favoring wound healing, whereas leukocytes (white blood cells) participate in host defense against incoming pathogens. The ability to concentrate both cell types found within PRF has shown pronounced benefits in the oral cavity, an area particularly concentrated with various oral bacteria.

Over the years, several research articles focused on the use of PRF for multiple applications in regenerative dentistry; more recently, publications have begun to emerge dealing specifically with its use in endodontics. I have the great pleasure to announce the launch of this new book, *PRF Applications in Endodontics*, which addresses this topic in extensive detail.

The book begins by providing background knowledge on various cell types found in regenerative medicine with particular focus on stem cells. Thereafter, the book rapidly enters into a variety of chapters dedicated to PRF with a brief history regarding its scientific background, including growth factors, armamentarium, and protocols utilized to fabricate PRF. The discussion then transitions to nonsurgical applications in regenerative endodontics, as well as its use in dentistry, particularly for the formation of a bone grafting material complex including bone grafting particles and autologous PRF (aka “sticky bone”). Its use as an alternative to bone grafts and other biomaterials is further discussed in later chapters dealing with endodontic surgery. These include various endodontic procedures indicated following common human “accidents” (accidental tooth loss and replantation, for instance), for improvements in furcation-involved teeth as a result of iatrogenic procedures, for root-end resection procedures, and for the management of surgical cysts.

This textbook is for both the beginner as well as the advanced endodontist and practicing dentist working in the field of endodontics wishing to further improve their practice by adopting some of the latest regenerative protocols. It is certainly a first of its kind and a must-read in the field of endodontics, highlighting the benefits of autologous blood concentrates specifically dedicated to endodontic procedures.

Colleagues will certainly enjoy this read, and it will undoubtedly open many avenues of future research on the topic!

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Preface



As endodontists and periodontists, we are all familiar with the potential applications of platelet-rich plasma (PRP) in medicine and dentistry. But in the past few years, platelet-rich fibrin (PRF) has emerged as an alternative material in its own right. One of our first opportunities to observe the effects of PRF was in discussion with colleagues using it in oral surgery procedures. Their patients experienced remarkable hard and soft tissue healing with minimal postoperative discomfort. Intrigued, we dug further and discovered the widespread applications of PRF in dentistry and medicine.

The appeal of PRF stems from the fact that it is made from a patient's own blood. It is easy to prepare and can be used for many kinds of procedures, making it cost-effective. PRF has many potential applications in endodontics. It can be used in surgical endodontics and adjunctive surgical procedures such as root amputation and hemisection. In addition, it can be used for root perforation repair, vital pulp therapy, and regenerative endodontics. Furthermore, it can be used as a bone graft binder during socket preservation to create "sticky bone" for the closure of surgical sites.

When the three of us first met, the idea of sharing these various applications of PRF was an immediate common ground. We were working with residents at the time and knew how much they could benefit from learning about PRF. After using PRF and observing successful outcomes in several cases, we decided to take things to the next level. We brought together some of the most forward-thinking endodontists, periodontists, oral surgeons, and general practitioners to share our thoughts regarding potential use of this material in endodontics and other fields of dentistry.

This book, representing a collaboration of like-minded clinicians, is the first to introduce the idea of PRF and cord blood stem cells in endodontics. It contains an overview of PRF itself with up-to-date information on tissue regeneration, as well as step-by-step instructions on how to use PRF in a variety of endodontic and oral surgery procedures. We have been using this knowledge for years to improve tissue healing for our patients, and we hope this book will help you on your quest to improve healing for your patients.

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Introduction



Recent studies using novel biomaterial scaffolds that contain host endogenous growth factors represent a departure from traditional clinical approaches and may result in better and more predictable regenerative solutions in medicine and dentistry. As early as 1966, Rule and Winter published a case report regarding continued root formation and apical closure in an immature human premolar tooth using pulp bleeding as a scaffold. Nygaard-Ostby et al, Nevins et al, Iwaya et al, Banchs and Trope, as well as others reported pulp revascularization in teeth with necrotic pulps and immature apices that showed continuous root maturation, dentinal wall thickening and, in some cases, a positive response to vitality tests. In 2011, we reported a case of pulp revascularization using platelet-rich plasma (PRP) in a second maxillary premolar with immature root that had been accidentally extracted and then replanted. After removing the necrotic pulp, irrigating it with 5.25% sodium hypochlorite, and medicating it with a triple antibiotic paste for 3 weeks, we prepared PRP from the patient's blood and injected it into the canal space. Mineral trioxide aggregate (MTA) was placed over the clotted PRP and double-sealed with Cavit (3M) and amalgam. Radiographic examination of this tooth 5.5 months later showed resolution of the periapical lesion, further root development, and continued apical closure. Vitality tests elicited positive responses like those found in the first premolar tooth. The shortcomings of PRP include the need to draw blood from the patient and the complexity of centrifugation and purification in a clinical setting.

Platelet-rich fibrin (PRF) is an autologous product that contains high concentrations of nonactivated, functional intact platelets within a fibrin matrix that release a relatively constant concentration of growth factors/cytokines over a few days. It is easier to produce but it has to be used immediately after blood drawing and centrifugation. PRF is a potential substitute for PRP in regenerative endodontics and other regenerative procedures involving reconstruction of hard tissues, such as surgical endodontics and adjunctive surgical procedures like root amputation, hemisection, and repair of root perforations.

The main purpose of *PRF Applications in Endodontics* is to stimulate research in regenerative procedures in endodontics and encourage clinicians to use PRF to improve healing of their patients and save natural dentition. The book has seven chapters and starts with the history of stem cells in regenerative medicine and its possible applications in endodontics, followed by PRF armamentarium and description of how to make PRF, use of PRF in nonsurgical endodontic procedures, its soft tissue applications, hard tissue applications, surgical endodontics, and finally socket preservation. It is assembled by well-known scientists and clinicians who are experts in their fields and interested in the use of innovative materials and techniques to improve human lives.

Mahmoud Torabinejad, DMD, MSD, PhD

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Gain a better understanding of stem cell biology and how it relates to regenerative medicine, specifically dentistry
- Compare different sources of stem cells and the relative strengths and weaknesses associated with each source
- Gain a better understanding of a mesenchymal stem cell secretome and why it is important therapeutically



Stem Cells in Regenerative Medicine

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Regenerative medicine, also commonly known as *tissue engineering*, is a discipline of medicine that is focused on restoring native tissue structure and functionality to an afflicted tissue. Dentistry has traditionally been at the forefront of regenerative medicine, commonly employing novel bioactive materials to stimulate bone growth and regeneration. Recently, stem cells and other cell-based therapies have attracted significant attention in this space due to their ability to not only treat patients' symptoms but to improve physiologic activity and restore native tissue structure.

Stem cells are characterized by a capacity for self-renewal while maintaining an undifferentiated state and, given the proper stimulus, the ability to differentiate into various types of specialized somatic cells. Stem cells are further classified by their relative differentiation potential. Stem cells that can differentiate into any cell type in the body are termed *totipotent* and have the widest differentiation potential. *Mesenchymal stem cells* (MSCs) are multipotent stem cells that are most closely associated with the mesodermal lineage and are known to differentiate into chondrogenic, osteogenic, myogenic, and adipogenic cell types.¹



The discovery of stem cells and their multipotent potential has encouraged the development of the whole field of research, projected to have reached \$170 billion by 2020. In particular, the multipotent MSCs, with their stem-like quality to differentiate into mesodermal cell types, have been a focus. Indeed, overall revenue for MSC products was projected to be \$10.9 billion from 2010 to 2020. Alongside the possibilities of therapeutic successes (ranging from treating graft-versus-host disease, Crohn disease, spinal cord injury, and use in support of hematopoietic stem cell treatments) comes the inherent ethical and logistic dilemmas behind obtaining stem cells. This chapter focuses on MSCs due to their popularity for regenerative applications.

Mesenchymal Stem Cells

Stem cell sources

First isolated in bone marrow, bone marrow–derived MSCs were found to be precursors to multiple cell types and could be viably cultured while retaining their capacity for multilineage differentiation. Obtained from an invasive bone marrow harvesting procedure, bone marrow–derived MSCs avoid the ethical concerns as well as tumorigenicity of embryonic stem cells and have subsequently been used in a nearly exponential increase in research studies and trials.² Unfortunately, bone marrow–derived MSCs are relatively low yield and limited to autologous use, requiring in vitro expansion that increases the risk of contamination. Additionally, harvesting the cells requires a surgical procedure with associated donor morbidity and risk, and the potency (ie, “stemness”) has been questioned when compared with more recently discovered sources of MSCs.³

One of these sources is umbilical cord blood (also known as *cord blood*), collected via venipuncture of the typically discarded umbilical cord. Painless and without morbidity, cord blood is considered superior to human bone marrow stem cells in its harvesting and yield. Cord blood is cryopreserved in two main methods using dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO): (1) red cell reduction, which is less expensive to store and easier to defrost; and (2) plasma depletion, which is more economical to process. Public cord blood banks cost about \$1,500 to \$2,500 per unit stored, while private banks typically charge an initial processing fee of \$1,400 to \$2,300 plus annual storage costs of \$115 to \$150. However, MSCs only represent a small proportion—1,000 to 5,000 MSCs in one 100-mL unit of cord blood—of the cell types within cord blood, which includes hematopoietic cell types, endothelial and progenitor cells, as well as MSCs.⁴



There has also been recent attention toward Wharton's jelly (WJ) within umbilical cords. WJ was found at the turn of the century to contain a multipotent, fibroblast-like MSC population with greater multipotent potency, faster proliferation, and longer life spans than adult bone marrow-derived MSCs.³ This is a result of reduced telomere length. Telomeres shorten with age, eventually resulting in cellular senescence. MSCs isolated from cord blood are much younger than adult MSCs and possess significantly longer telomeres.⁵

MSCs in WJ are an entity apart from cord blood MSCs and endothelial cells from the umbilical vein. The plentiful presence of MSCs in WJ is theorized to either be due to the trapping and retaining of fetal MSCs during the two waves of migration of fetal MSCs in early development or to the fact that the cells in WJ are actually primitive MSCs that originate from mesenchyme already present in the umbilical cord matrix. More research has been focused on not only the characterization and usage of these WJ-derived MSCs, but also on discrete differences of the stem cell populations depending on the anatomical region of the WJ.⁶

The most recent development is that what was once thought to be a single mass providing uniform MSCs is actually more anatomically distinct. There are six different zones of the cord with cells in various stages of differentiation: (1) the surface (amniotic) epithelium, (2) subamniotic stroma, (3) clefts, (4) intervascular stroma, (5) perivascular stroma, and (6) vessels. However, the descriptors separating these zones are not clear. It is thought that WJ is composed mainly of perivascular progenitors but may possibly include nonperivascular progenitors as they move away from the vasculature.⁶ In addition to the anatomical differences, there is concern that the MSCs may differ lengthwise and that the mother end of the umbilical cord may have different mesenchymal features than the fetus end of the umbilical cord.⁷

In addition to harvesting and potency advantages, cord blood and WJ-derived MSCs are also not limited to autologous use. Due to their excellent immunomodulatory properties and universally tolerated surface marker profiles, MSCs isolated from cord blood and WJ can be made available to patients as allografts.^{8,9} Using cells isolated from birth tissue as "off-the-shelf" allografts greatly simplifies the manufacturing process of MSCs for therapeutic use, providing a standardized, scalable method of producing cells that does not need to be personalized for each patient.

Importance of the secretome

The therapeutic effectiveness of MSCs is well documented, especially as it pertains to wound healing. However, the mechanisms of action are not well understood. *Stem cells* are partially defined as cells that are capable of differentiation into a



variety of specialized somatic cells, and this knowledge has fueled speculation that cell differentiation upon engraftment is responsible for the observed therapeutic effects. On further investigation, it would appear that this is not the case.

Recent research has shown that MSCs introduced therapeutically primarily function through trophic and immunomodulatory signaling pathways, and the stem and progenitor cells of the host actually do most of the work.¹⁰ This is why the *secretome*, or the collection of bioactive molecules secreted from the cells, has been receiving more attention from researchers. Rich in growth factors and cytokines that are associated with modulating inflammation and promoting angiogenesis, the MSC secretome seems perfectly suited to enhance wound healing. This is evidenced in human physiology by the ability of MSCs to zero in on areas of inflammation and injury and secrete bioactive factors.¹¹

The regenerative effects of growth factors and cytokines have been well documented in dentistry. Peptides in the transforming growth factor β (TGF- β), bone morphogenetic protein (BMP), fibroblast growth factor (FGF), and interleukin (IL) families are crucial components driving regeneration, especially as it relates to bone growth.¹² These factors stimulate host cells in regenerative pathways, but it can be challenging to maintain dosing and ensure efficient cell uptake of these factors therapeutically. The MSC secretome is rich in many of these peptides, suggesting that the secretome could be responsible for some of the observed therapeutic effects.¹³

Stem Cells in Regenerative Endodontics

The potential utility of cord blood MSCs has not yet been fully realized in the relatively new field of regenerative endodontics. Since its development in 2004 by Banchs and Trope, regenerative endodontics has been employed as a root-preserving alternative to a root canal, utilized to eradicate pulp infections in immature permanent teeth, thus permitting further root development and preservation of teeth in patients who are still growing.¹⁴ Liao et al¹⁵ revealed the presence of osteogenic MSCs in both inflamed pulp tissue and inflamed periapical tissues, and further investigation by Chrepa et al¹⁶ revealed that the evoked bleeding step demonstrated an increase in local accumulation of undifferentiated MSCs even in a mature tooth. Because of these revelations, the recommended American Association of Endodontists protocol was revised to use irrigants that are less toxic to stem cells and propose the use of platelet-rich plasma, platelet-rich fibrin, and autologous fibrin matrix in place of the simple blood clot.

However, there is no evidence in the literature of regeneration of the dentin pulp complex. The effect of noninflamed apical residual tissue in regeneration



of pulp has been investigated recently in an animal model. Torabinejad et al¹⁷ conducted a study providing evidence that noninflamed apical residual pulp has the capability to regenerate the normal pulp. Given the discovery of the presence of stem cells involved in the restoration of the root, studies are now underway to assess if implantation of stem cells may in fact accelerate pulp tissue regeneration and healing and perhaps shorten the wait time. Tissue engineering permitted two strategies: (1) the direct implantation of freshly isolated stem cells with or without biodegradable scaffolds, and (2) implantation of preassembled tissue constructs containing in vitro cultured cells in the scaffold.¹⁸ Studies showed that the implantation of stem/progenitor cells isolated from a human root in a mouse model resulted in formation of a pulp-like tissue with a layer of dentin-like tissue along the canal wall.¹⁹

Unfortunately, retrieval of autologous dental stem cells is difficult, especially in the common case where all other teeth are healthy. It is even more difficult to obtain one of the five subtypes of dental stem cells: (1) dental pulp stem cells (DPSCs), (2) stem cells from human exfoliated deciduous teeth (SHEDs), (3) stem cells from apical papilla (SCAPs), (4) periodontal ligament stem cells (PDLSCs), and (5) tooth germ progenitor cells (TGPCs).²⁰

As such, recent efforts have investigated the use of MSCs derived from other origins, such as human bone marrow–derived MSCs, which have potential for osteogenesis as a more multipotent stem cell than the differentiated dental stem cells. However, bone marrow–derived MSCs are associated with risks, mortality, and high cost of bone marrow harvesting and processing. Induced pluripotent stem cells have also been investigated,^{21,22} which studies show contribute to mesenchymal progenitors to create early cells in the osteogenic lineage. Unfortunately, the study by Sueyama et al²³ using a rat model found that implanting MSCs alone showed incomplete dentin bridges, while coimplantation of MSCs with endothelial cells resulted in pulp healing with complete dentin bridge formation.

As such, a viable strategy to allow osteogenic regeneration involves the use of cord blood MSCs. This avoids the ethical concerns of embryonic stem cells and the morbidity of bone marrow acquisition while retaining the multipotency required for the regeneration of complex endodontic tissue. In 2018, Chen et al²⁴ showed that MSCs derived from cord blood were able to achieve successful osteogenic and angiogenic properties, in addition to density, when cocultured with human umbilical vein endothelial cells. These cord blood MSCs had similar capabilities and performance as human bone marrow–derived MSCs and human embryonic stem cells.²⁴

Currently, the literature does not indicate any effect of cord blood stem cells used in combination with residual dental pulp tissue on the ability of a tooth to regenerate pulpal tissues. The authors propose that cord blood stem cells will enhance the ability of residual pulp tissue to regenerate.

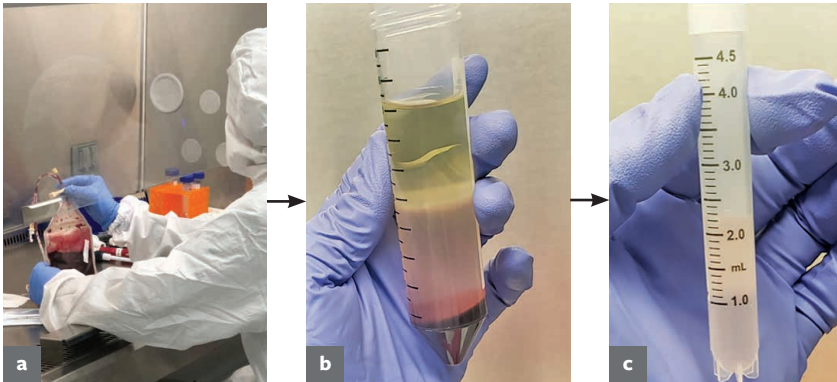


FIG 1-1 The different stages of cord blood processing. (a) Blood bag as it was received being processed under aseptic conditions. (b) Conical tube after centrifugation. Note plasma layer (*top*), buffy coat layer (*middle*), and red blood cells (*bottom*). (c) PBMCs suspended in Stem-Cellbanker ready for storage in a cryovial.

MSC Isolation Methods

Cord blood–derived and WJ-derived MSCs are an excellent option for therapeutic use because they are easily collected, readily available, and highly proliferative. They can also be used as allografts. Procedures used to isolate MSCs from these sources are described in the following sections.

Cord blood

Cord blood is collected from eligible donors at the time of delivery and transported to the processing facility on ice (2°C to 8°C) in a blood bag. Upon arrival, the blood is processed immediately under aseptic conditions (Fig 1-1a).

The blood bag is first drained into conical tubes and centrifuged at $1500 \times g$ to separate components. This results in distinct layers in the conical tube, with plasma rising to the top and red blood cells forming a pellet at the bottom of the tube. There is also a distinct buffy coat layer below the plasma that contains the cells of interest. The buffy coat layer is then collected and diluted with a phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) solution before undergoing density gradient centrifugation. The buffy coat and PBS mixture is added to Ficoll-Paque (GE Healthcare) density gradient media and then centrifuged at $409g$. This results in an isolation of peripheral blood mononucleated cells (PBMCs) in the resulting buffy coat (Fig 1-1b).



The PBMCs are then collected and diluted once again with PBS before being centrifuged at $409 \times g$. This wash step is repeated until the resulting supernatant is no longer cloudy or hazy, and the resulting pellet is then resuspended in Stem-Cellbanker (Amsbio). Cell count, viability, and surface marker profile are then tested using flow cytometry. This information is used to aliquot the appropriate cell number into cryovials, and the cells are immediately stored at -80°C (Fig 1-1c).

Wharton's jelly

Umbilical cords are collected from eligible donors at the time of delivery and transported to the processing facility on ice (2°C to 8°C) in Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Media (DMEM). Cords are processed immediately under aseptic conditions, and MSCs are collected for culture according to the procedure described below.

To start a primary explant culture, a roughly 1×1 -cm segment of cord is obtained using sterile forceps and scalpel. This segment is dissected to remove blood vessels and isolate the WJ. The resulting segments of WJ are then added to 10 mL of a collagenase-DMEM solution and incubated at 37°C for 4 hours. The collagenase-DMEM solution is prepared to a strength of 300 collagenase degrading units (CDU) per mL. Digested pieces of tissue are then collected using sterile forceps and transferred to a T-25 flask containing 10 mL of MSC-Brew Xeno-Free Media (Miltenyi Biotec). Cultures are then incubated for 72 hours at 37°C , at which point the media is replaced and the pieces of tissue are removed from the flask.

Once the primary culture has been established, regular media changes occur every 2 to 3 days, and cells are allowed to grow to 80% to 90% confluency. At this point, cells are passaged using trypsin-EDTA solution (0.25%) and reseeded into a T-75 flask. The culture is maintained this way until the target number of cells has been reached, at which point passaged cells are suspended in Stem-Cellbanker and frozen at -80°C .

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Page references followed by “f” denote figures, “t” denote tables, and “b” denote boxes.

A

Allografts
 description of, 44
 freeze-dried bone, 73, 74f
 guided tissue regeneration uses of, 58
 mesenchymal stem cells as, 3
 platelet-rich fibrin with, 61, 61f, 67f
 Alpha granules, in platelets, 11, 72
 Alveolar ridge preservation, 72–73, 74f
 American Association of Endodontists, 4
 Angiogenesis, 39, 59
 Apical plug, 22–23, 23f
 Apical surgical defects, 55f, 55–56
 Autogenous bone, 58
 Autologous blood, 17
 Autologous blood concentrates. *See also*
 Platelet-rich fibrin; Platelet-rich plasma.
 as membranes, 25–28
 as osseous graft enhancers, 39–41
 soft tissue applications of. *See* Soft tissue.

B

Basic fibroblast growth factor, 40, 43, 60
 bFGF. *See* Basic fibroblast growth factor.
 Blood-derived biologics
 concentrated growth factor. *See*
 Concentrated growth factor;
 Concentrated growth factor
 membranes.

gingival recession treated with, 34f, 35
 immediate implant placement at extraction
 using, 35–37, 36f, 51–53, 52f
 as membranes, 25–28
 as osseous graft enhancers, 39–41
 platelet-rich fibrin. *See* Platelet-rich fibrin.
 platelet-rich plasma. *See* Platelet-rich
 plasma.
 sinus augmentation without osseous graft
 material using, 31–32, 32f
 soft tissue thickening using, 33, 35, 33f–34f
 BMP. *See* Bone morphogenetic protein.
 Bone formation, 40, 60
 Bone marrow
 mesenchymal stem cells derived from, 2, 5
 platelets from, 9–10
 Bone morphogenetic protein, 4, 72
 Bone regeneration. *See also* Guided tissue
 regeneration.
 growth factors for, 72
 platelet-rich fibrin for, 73
 Buffy coat, 6, 6f

C

Cancellous bone, 58
 CGF. *See* Concentrated growth factor.
 CGF membranes. *See* Concentrated growth
 factor membranes.
 Collagenase degrading units, 7
 CollaPlug, 21f
 Concentrated growth factor
 antimicrobial properties of, 43
 bone formation uses of, 40
 fabrication of, 26–28, 27f
 fibrin clot, 27–28, 43

liquid phase of, 28
 platelet-rich fibrin versus, 40

Concentrated growth factor glue, 27–28, 43

Concentrated growth factor membranes
 fabrication of, 28–30, 29f–30f
 fibrin clot, 28–29, 29f
 gingival recession treated with, 34f, 35
 growth factors in, 26
 immediate implant placement at extraction
 using, 36, 36f
 osseous socket grafting uses of, 44, 45f
 sinus augmentation without osseous graft
 material using, 31–32, 32f
 soft tissue thickening using, 33, 35, 33f–34f

Concentrated growth factor sticky bone
 apical surgical defects grafted using, 55f,
 55–56
 crestal sinus augmentation uses of, 53, 54f
 definition of, 40
 dehiscence correction at extraction using,
 46f, 46–47
 fabrication of, 41–43, 42f–43f
 illustration of, 40f
 immediate implant placement at extraction
 to seal site with osseous graft using,
 51–53, 52f
 lateral ridge augmentation uses of, 47–50,
 48f–49f, 51f
 osseous socket grafting uses of, 44–45,
 44f–45f
 root-end resection and, 61
 as scaffold, 60

Cord blood
 cell types in, 2
 costs associated with, 2
 cryopreservation of, 2
 processing of, 6f

Cord blood mesenchymal stem cells
 description of, 2
 isolation methods for, 6–7
 osteogenic regeneration uses of, 5
 processing of, 6f
 pulp tissue and, 5

Cortical bone, 58

Crestal sinus augmentation
 concentrated growth factor membrane
 for, 32
 concentrated growth factor sticky bone
 for, 53, 54f

Cytokines, 4, 10, 10t, 72

D

Decortication, 48f

Dehiscence correction at tooth extraction,
 46f, 46–47

Dental pulp stem cells, 5

Dental stem cells, 5

Dentin pulp complex, 4

Dentoalveolar soft tissue healing, 9

Dimethyl sulfoxide, 2

DMEM. See Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Media.

DMSO. See Dimethyl sulfoxide.

DPSCs. See Dental pulp stem cells.

Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Media, 7

E

Embryonic stem cells, 2, 5

Endodontic surgery
 guided tissue regeneration, 57–59
 osseous defects created by, 57
 root resection. See Root resection.
 root-end resection. See Root-end resection.

Endo-perio lesions, 57, 59

Exfoliated deciduous teeth, stem cells from, 5

Extraction, tooth
 alveolar ridge changes after, 72
 dehiscence correction at, 46f, 46–47
 immediate implant placement at, 35–37, 36f,
 51–53, 52f

F

FDDBA. See Freeze-dried bone allograft.

FGF. See Fibroblast growth factor.

Fibrin clot
 concentrated growth factor, 27–29, 29f, 43
 growth factors in, 27
 platelet-rich, 13, 14f, 19f–20f, 27

Fibroblast growth factor, 4

Fibronectin, 72

Flap elevation, 25

Freeze-dried bone allograft, 73, 74f

Furcation lesions, 57–59

G

Gingival recession, 35

Graft(s)
 osseous. See Osseous graft/grafting.
 particulate, 61



Granules, in platelets, 11, 72
 Growth factors. *See also specific growth factor.*
 alpha granule release of, 11
 bone regeneration uses of, 72
 concentrated. *See Concentrated growth factor.*
 in fibrin clot, 27
 in platelet-rich fibrin, 4, 10t, 12, 17, 40, 60, 71
 Guided tissue regeneration. *See also Bone regeneration.*
 description of, 25
 furcation lesions treated with, 57–59

H

Hard tissue applications
 alveolar ridge preservation, 72–73, 74f
 grafting. *See Osseous graft/grafting.*
 socket preservation, 72–73
 tissue regeneration, 73

I

IL-1. *See Interleukin-1.*
 IL-4. *See Interleukin-4.*
 IL-6. *See Interleukin-6.*
 Immediate implant placement
 concentrated growth factor membrane for, 36, 36f
 concentrated growth factor sticky bone uses in, 51–53, 52f
 Implant(s)
 disadvantages of, 60
 immediate placement of. *See Immediate implant placement.*
 Innate immunity, platelets' role in, 10
 Insulinlike growth factors 1 and 2, 10t, 40, 43, 60, 72
 Interleukins
 -1, 10t
 -4, 10t
 -6, 10t
 description of, 4

L

Lateral ridge augmentation
 concentrated growth factor sticky bone for, 47–50, 48f–49f, 51f

 lateral wall defect treated with, 50, 51f
 with membrane, 47–49, 48f–49f
 without membrane, 49f, 49–50
 Leukocyte- and platelet-rich fibrin
 characteristics of, 11t
 development of, 11
 open-source protocol for, 13, 14f
 Leukocyte- and platelet-rich plasma, 11t
 Leukocytes, 10
 L-PRF. *See Leukocyte- and platelet-rich fibrin.*
 L-PRP. *See Leukocyte- and platelet-rich plasma.*

M

Macrophages, 71
 Membranes
 blood-derived biologics as, 25–28
 nonresorbable, 26
 platelet-rich fibrin, 13, 14f, 20, 21f, 72
 resorbable, 26
 Mesenchymal stem cells
 allograft uses of, 3
 applications for, 2
 bone marrow-derived, 2, 5
 cell types derived from, 1
 from cord blood. *See Cord blood mesenchymal stem cells.*
 definition of, 1
 mechanism of action, 3–4
 osteogenic, 4
 pulp tissue regeneration uses of, 5
 regenerative endodontics use of, 4–5
 revenue from, 2
 secretome from, 3–4
 signaling pathways of, 4
 sources of, 2–3
 from Wharton's jelly, 3, 7
 wound healing applications of, 3–4
 Methylene blue, 65
 Mineral trioxide aggregate, 20, 22–23, 23f, 64
 Molar root resection, 60
 MSCs. *See Mesenchymal stem cells.*
 MTA. *See Mineral trioxide aggregate.*

N

Nonresorbable membranes, 26

O

- Osseous graft/grafting
 - apical surgical defects filled using, 55f, 55–56
 - blood-derived biologics as enhancers of, 39–41
 - concentrated growth factor sticky bone use as, 44–45, 51, 52f, 53, 44f–45f
 - dispensing of, 41f
 - immediate implant placement uses of, 51, 52f, 53
 - platelet-rich fibrin added to, 61, 63f, 66f
 - as scaffold, 40, 59
- Osteogenic mesenchymal stem cells, 4
- Osteogenic regeneration, 5
- Osteotomy, 54f

P

- PBMCs. See Peripheral blood mononucleated cells.
- PBS. See Phosphate-buffered saline.
- PDGF. See Platelet-derived growth factor.
- PDLSCs. See Periodontal ligament stem cells.
- Peri-implant mucositis, 60
- Peri-implantitis, 60
- Periodontal ligament stem cells, 5
- Peripheral blood mononucleated cells, 6f, 6–7
- Phosphate-buffered saline, 6
- Plasma depletion, 2
- Platelet(s)
 - bone marrow production of, 9–10
 - granules in, 11, 72
 - innate immunity role of, 10
- Platelet concentrates, 11, 11t
- Platelet-derived growth factor, 10t, 72
- Platelet-derived growth factor-AB, 72
- Platelet-derived growth factor-BB, 40, 43, 60
- Platelet-poor plasma, 43
- Platelet-rich fibrin
 - allografts with, 61, 61f, 67f
 - autologous blood for, 17
 - centrifugation of, 12, 19f, 26, 71
 - composition of, 71
 - concentrated growth factor versus, 40
 - definition of, 71
 - endodontic surgery uses of, 58–59
 - fibrin network created by, 11–12
 - freeze-dried bone allograft with, 73, 74f
 - as grafting material, 59, 61
 - growth factors in, 10t, 12, 17, 26, 40, 60, 71
 - leukocyte and, 11, 11t, 13, 14f

- liquid plasma, 42
 - as membrane, 13, 14f, 20, 21f, 72
 - nonsurgical applications of, 12
 - in osseous defect, 64–66, 65f–66f
 - osseous graft material with, 63f
 - platelet-rich plasma and, comparisons between, 11–12
 - pure, 11t
 - regenerative endodontics applications of, 12, 71
 - ridge preservation uses of, 72–73, 74f
 - root resection and, 66–68, 67f
 - root-end resection and, 64–66, 65f–66f
 - as scaffold, 17–21, 18b, 19f–21f, 60
 - scientific characteristics of, 9–11
 - socket preservation uses of, 72–73
 - stem cells in, 17
 - surgical applications of, 12
- Platelet-rich fibrin clot, 13, 14f, 19f–20f, 27
- Platelet-rich plasma
 - centrifugation cycle for, 12
 - endodontic surgery uses of, 58–59
 - leukocyte, 11t
 - platelet-rich fibrin and, comparisons between, 11–12
- “Poncho” technique, 36–37, 36f, 53
- Posterior maxilla, 31
- PPP. See Platelet-poor plasma.
- PRF. See Platelet-rich fibrin.
- PRP. See Platelet-rich plasma.
- Pulp tissue regeneration, 5

R

- RBCs. See Red blood cells.
- Red blood cells, 27
- Red cell reduction, 2
- Regenerative endodontics
 - apical plug, 22–23, 23f
 - applications of, 4
 - definition of, 12, 17
 - mesenchymal stem cells use in, 4–5
 - platelet-rich fibrin applications in, 12, 71
- Regenerative medicine, 1–8
- Resorbable membranes, 26
- Ridge preservation, 72–73, 74f
- Root resection
 - indications for, 59
 - molars, 60
 - platelet-rich fibrin site grafting with, 66–68, 67f
 - survival rates for, 59–60



Root resorption, 65f
 Root-end resection
 concentrated growth factor sticky bone
 with, 61
 indications for, 59
 platelet-rich fibrin site grafting with, 64–66,
 65f–66f
 technique for, 62–63, 63f

S

Scaffold
 osseous graft material as, 40, 59
 platelet-rich fibrin as, 17–21, 18b, 19f–21f, 60
 SCAPs. *See* Stem cells from apical papilla.
 Secretome, 3–4
 SHEDs. *See* Stem cells from exfoliated
 deciduous teeth.
 Sinus augmentation without osseous graft
 material, 31–32, 32f
 Sinus membrane perforation, 31
 Socket preservation, 72–73
 Soft tissue, blood-derived biologics
 applications in
 concentrated growth factor. *See*
 Concentrated growth factor.
 immediate implant placement, 36, 36f
 as membranes, 25–28
 thickening of, 33, 35, 33f–34f
 Stem cells
 autogenous bone as source of, 58
 characteristics of, 1
 definition of, 3–4
 dental, 5
 embryonic, 2, 5
 mesenchymal. *See* Mesenchymal stem cells.
 multipotent potential of, 2
 periodontal ligament, 5
 pulp tissue regeneration uses of, 5
 regenerative endodontics use of, 4–5
 in regenerative medicine, 1–8
 totipotent, 1
 Stem cells from apical papilla, 5
 Stem cells from exfoliated deciduous teeth, 5
 Sticky bone. *See* Concentrated growth factor
 sticky bone.

T

Telomeres, 3
 TGF- β . *See* Transforming growth factor β .

TGF- β_1 . *See* Transforming growth factor β_1 .
 TGPCs. *See* Tooth germ progenitor cells.
 Thrombospondin-1, 72
 Tissue engineering. *See also* Regenerative
 medicine.
 key elements for, 12, 17
 strategies for, 5
 TNF- α . *See* Tumor necrosis factor α .
 Tooth germ progenitor cells, 5
 Totipotent stem cells, 1
 Transforming growth factor β , 4
 Transforming growth factor β_1 , 10t, 40, 43,
 60, 72
 Tumor necrosis factor α , 10t

U

Umbilical cord
 blood from. *See* Cord blood.
 Wharton's jelly from, 2–3
 zones of, 3

V

Vascular endothelial growth factor, 10t, 40,
 43, 60, 72
 VEGF. *See* Vascular endothelial growth factor.
 Vertical root fracture, 67f
 Vitronectin, 72

W

Wharton's jelly, 3, 7
 White-top Vacutainer tube, 28–29, 30f, 41
 Whole blood, 9–10
 WJ. *See* Wharton's jelly.
 Wound healing
 angiogenesis in, 59
 cytokines in, 10t
 growth factors in, 10t
 mesenchymal stem cells in, 3–4
 whole blood for, 9

X

Xenografts, 44, 58