INTRODUCED in the 1930’s, prolotherapy has long been accepted as an evidence based approach to stimulating healing. The process involves ultrasound guided injection of a mixture of lidocaine (local anesthetic) and dextrose (sugar) at the sight of injury. This safe combined mixture "kickstarts" the body’s natural healing process and allows the body to heal injuries that have become chronic.

Scientific studies designed to determine who benefits most from prolotherapy have identified that prolotherapy works best for people with ligament, tendon and joint injuries that have failed to progress through the natural healing process, and have not responded to physiotherapy and other treatments. However, an individualized assessment is required to determine if prolotherapy is right for you.
Frequently Asked Questions

Is the procedure painful?
The injections do cause some discomfort. However, local anesthetic included in the injection helps to remove the discomfort quickly. Most people will feel stiff for 24-48 hours. Discomfort can be managed with Tylenol and/or Robaxacet. However, ADVIL/IBUPROFEN/MOTRIN, ASPIRIN/ASA, and CELEBREX should not be used. If taken, these medications will decrease the inflammatory process and reduce the effectiveness of prolotherapy.

How many treatments will I need?
In general, men require three to six treatments. Women often require six to nine treatments. Treatments are completed 2-4 weeks apart. Clients who continue with physiotherapy over the course of prolotherapy often obtain the best results.

Are there any risks?
Complications from injecting extremity joints are extremely rare. However, skin infections and allergic reactions can occur.

While extremely rare, complications from injections into the upper spine can include entry into the spinal canal and the possibility of puncturing the lung. The use of ultrasound to guide each injection significantly reduces the risk of any complications.

Your Appointment
You will be assessed by a senior physiotherapist before receiving treatment with Dr. Lloyd Tapper. This is to ensure that you experience the best possible outcome from the treatment that you receive.

What are the costs?
Prolotherapy is not covered by Alberta Health. However, some private insurance plans may cover the cost.

What should I wear?
You may need to disrobe sufficiently to expose the area requiring treatment. A hospital gown is available if required.

Other Considerations
Your level of activity will be dependent on your level of comfort. We recommend that you stay as active as possible without aggravating any symptoms of discomfort. Tylenol and muscle relaxants may be used for comfort. However anti-inflammatories including Advil/Motrin/Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Celebrex and other non steroidal anti-inflammatories must be avoided as they block the effectiveness of prolotherapy.