

## Four Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers physicians are named *Cincinnati Magazine* “Top Doctors”



Dr. Baker

The January 2012 issue of *Cincinnati Magazine* named four Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers (COC) physicians among an elite group of Top Doctors for 2012, chosen by their peers. James Baker, M.D., and Thomas Due, M.D., were named in the category of hand surgery, and Forest Heis, M.D., and John Larkin, M.D., were named in the category of orthopaedic surgery.



Dr. Due

What makes them top doctors? We asked them to tell us about themselves to give you some insights.



Dr. Heis

**Dr. Baker** wants referring physicians to know that he is fellowship trained in hand/wrist surgery. He's very thorough and detail oriented. "I personally call each and every surgical patient the day after surgery to check on them." **Dr. Larkin**



Dr. Larkin

wants community doctors to know what he does – shoulders, knees, total joints and arthritis. He also does cartilage repair and transplantation for treatment of arthritis. **Dr. Due** has been in practice for more than 25 years, and was the first fellowship-trained orthopaedic specialist in Northern Kentucky. He specializes in hand and wrist surgery. **Dr. Heis** has been in practice for more than nine years. He is fellowship trained in knee, shoulder and sports medicine, and is a team doctor at Northern Kentucky University. He specializes in knee and shoulder arthroscopy, as well as being the primary orthopedist in

charge of fracture work at St. Elizabeth Ft. Thomas.

Personal contact is a common thread for these physicians in what they like about their practice. **Dr. Heis** says "While I certainly enjoy operating, I especially enjoy interacting with my patients in the office, doing my best to make them comfortable in dealing with conditions that make them uncomfortable." **Dr. Baker** cites the results as what he enjoys most, "Returning someone to an activity/work from an injury that they previously couldn't do, or had given up on." **Dr. Larkin** tells us, "The part of my practice that I like the most is meeting and being involved in patients' lives. I enjoy listening to their 'life story.' We are blessed in orthopaedics in that we can actually change lives dramatically – for elderly patients who cannot walk, we can replace a joint, and they can play golf again; to the teenager who is able to return to sports; to the injured worker who can go back to the job and regain a sense of self-worth. It is a gift!" **Dr. Due** also says that "seeing patients in the office" is what he enjoys most about his practice.

At Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers, our goal is to help our doctors serve their patients better. Here's what they tell us about how COC makes a difference in their practice. **Dr. Larkin** tells us that, "Being part of Commonwealth helps each of us remember we are not alone – we have support." **Dr. Due** says, "I enjoy being a part of a multi-subspecialty group. Working as a team helps us to take care of the whole patient." **Dr. Heis** explains, "Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers has been a great place to work. Back when I interviewed, many groups wanted me to work for them; Commonwealth was



one group who very much wanted me to work *with* them. We are blessed with a great team of generalists and specialists, who not only allow me to concentrate on my specialty interests, but also to help care for the whole gamut of people who come through our doors. There is a great interplay and exchange of ideas and expertise which allows me to better treat my patients." **Dr. Baker** says what makes the difference for him is the team approach, such as the radiologist available for consultation. He adds, "And I often collaborate with Dr. Due or Dr. Greiw on difficult hand/elbow cases. Two heads are better than one."

### In this issue

Welcome to *Ortho Connect*. The goal of this newsletter is to keep you up to date on current issues in orthopaedics. If you have suggestions, contact us at 859-301-0718.

- Four of our doctors named "Top Doctors" ..... **cover**
- Platelet-rich plasma: A new option..... **2**
- Patient feedback tells us how we're doing ..... **3**
- All about us ..... **4**

# Platelet-rich plasma:

## A new option for tendon and ligament injuries

Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy has been around since the early 1990s, but is relatively new to orthopaedics and sports medicine. We sat down for a conversation with Matthew DesJardins, M.D., who has been treating patients with PRP for the past two years. The only physician in Northern Kentucky using PRP for sports medicine, he has done about 150 PRP procedures.

### How is PRP used?

It was initially used by oral surgeons and plastic surgeons to stimulate healing in procedures. In the mid-2000s, orthopedists and sports medicine doctors like me started using it for our applications.



We're using it in tendon issues like tennis elbow, patellar tendonitis, Achilles tendonitis, certain groin and hip injuries, and even plantar fasciitis. Most commonly, I'm using it for tendon problems, but have also used it to treat ligaments in the elbow and ankle.

### Why use PRP?

All of our tissues require blood supply or circulation from our body to heal. The native blood supply in tendon structures is low, so once there is tendon breakdown, the body's natural healing process tends to be very slow.

PRP allows us to do two things:

- It allows us to inject some of those blood products directly into the tissue.
- Those cells will recruit more help to heal it.

### What is the process for PRP?

PRP is basically concentrating the platelets which are involved in healing out of the normal blood. We do a normal standard blood draw, spin it in a centrifuge and separate it into layers. That concentrates the platelets about five to ten times the body's normal concentration.

PRP is an image guided procedure; we localize the tissue under ultrasound. This allows us to target the tissue that is specifically damaged and improves our accuracy. The other part of the procedure that I typically do when

I'm treating chronic tendon problems is what's called a needle tenotomy. With a needle we scuff up and penetrate the tendon and the bone to which it's attached in order to stimulate

bleeding

mechanically. After that's done, the PRP is injected.

The platelets come into contact with the tendon tissue and structures that we are treating, and release growth factors that initiate the healing process, just like your body naturally does when it is injured.

### How long does the procedure take?

Patients are generally in the office about one to two hours. It takes about 30 minutes to process the blood, and then we numb the body part with a local anesthetic. We then scan with ultrasound to target the right area. I will spend 5-10 minutes doing the needle part of the procedure and then inject the PRP. Total procedure time is about 15 minutes.

### What are the risks/advantages of PRP?

Because PRP is done in the office under local anesthesia, there is less procedural risk. The reported complication rate is minimal.

One advantage of PRP is that patient recovery is quick. Using tennis elbow as an example, most people do it on Friday, do some icing and general stretching over the weekend, and are back to work on Monday with some manageable soreness in the elbow.

### What kind of results do you see from PRP?

Our results are good, but not perfect. Since we are using all the body's tools to stimulate healing, two months later, people who are really happy with it may still have some discomfort. Typically that will gradually abate with time.

### What were treatment options



### before PRP?

We are still using all of the other treatment options every day. We do not jump into PRP if symptoms are manageable. There are exercise programs, stretching, strengthening, icing or anti-inflammatories.

There is still surgical treatment available. Traditionally most people would not recommend operating unless you've had symptoms at least 9-12 months and you've failed all other treatments. If conservative treatments aren't doing enough for your symptom control, you can certainly try PRP sooner than surgery. It gives you another option.

### What else is important to know about PRP?

Here are some thoughts that may be of interest to physicians considering referring patients for PRP:

We are starting to use PRP earlier in the course of injury with athletes. There have been some studies with the athletic population returning to sports in a shorter period, so we are being a little more aggressive if we have the right patient.

PRP is not a magic elixir, but it's definitely a promising new technology with a good safety profile that is another option for a lot of people.

*Read about a patient's experience with PRP on page 3.*

**If you think your patient would benefit from this procedure, call 859-301-BONE (2663) to schedule an appointment with Matthew DesJardins, M.D.**

# PATIENT FEEDBACK

## tells us how we're doing

Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers sends patient satisfaction surveys to all of our new patients to obtain feedback on how we're doing.

Why ask? At Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers, we continuously strive to provide top quality, compassionate care, and we are committed to putting our patients' needs at the center of everything we do. To help us achieve this goal, and to better serve our patients, we send patient satisfaction surveys to all of our new patients to make sure they have had the best possible experience.

### PATIENT TESTIMONIALS

*"Everyone there was outstanding. I was always treated with respect, kindness, patience and professionalism. Thank you so much for Dr. Gates and the entire Commonwealth Orthopaedic team for saving my leg."*

*"Thank you to Dr. Baker and the wonderful staff that took care of me, you all made me feel so at ease. My daughter and I are so thankful for the wonderful job you all did; I feel a lot better now. I knew I would be in good hands the first day we all met. All I can say is thank you from the bottom of my heart."*

*"I have never worked with a doctor or staff that I was happier with or that impressed me more than Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers. After two years of neck pain that I had been led to believe was untreatable, Dr. Kakarlapudi performed a surgery that has taken away my pain. Anytime I called the office, someone was always there to give me an answer without making me wait to be called back. Excellent service!"*

*"Dr. Grefer, thank you so much for everything you have done for me. I don't know how many people see the work and caring you give each of your patients. I also want to thank the nursing staff and Teresa in your Workers' Comp department. They are kind, knowledgeable and helped me beyond belief."*

### Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers leads in inpatient satisfaction scores

This past quarter, we received exceptional results from the HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) survey. St. Elizabeth Healthcare routinely partners with HealthStream Research, a telephone survey vendor, to administer the HCAHPS survey. The survey, which was developed by CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services), is the first national, standardized, publicly reported survey of patients' perspectives of hospital care.

It consists of 18 core questions about critical aspects of the hospital experience and the attending physicians. Inpatients are randomly chosen to participate in this survey. The results showed that the physicians at Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers received high inpatient satisfaction in the following areas:

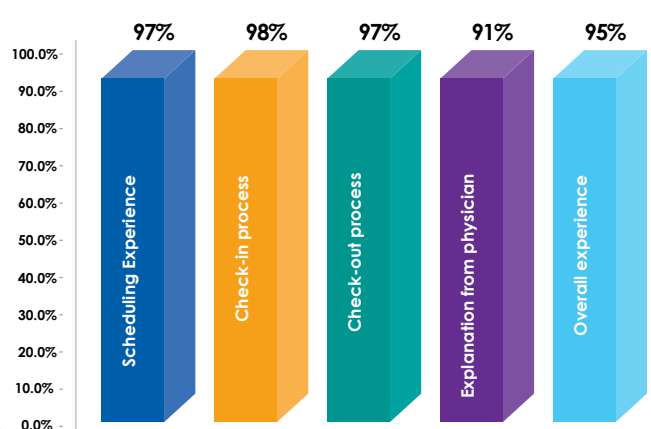
- Overall communication ..... 91 percent
- Treating patients with courtesy and respect ..... 96 percent
- Listening to the patient ..... 94 percent

**Our physicians also received the highest overall scores compared to all other service lines at St. Elizabeth Hospital – Edgewood, Florence and Fort Thomas.**

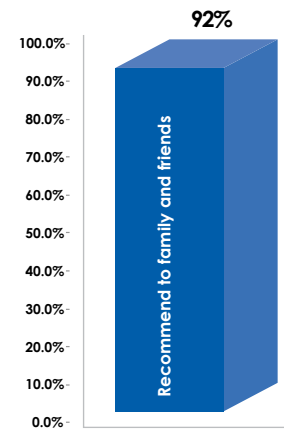
### Patient Satisfaction Results

January 2011-January 2012

Percent of patients who indicated that Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers met or exceeded their expectations in these areas.



Percent of patients who indicated they were likely or very likely to recommend Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers to family and friends.



## A patient's story: 'PRP gives people like me an option'

"I was incapacitated," says Deb Grover. "I couldn't sit, I couldn't stand. I couldn't pick up my grandkids; I couldn't play tennis." A cardiac nurse, Grover enjoys tennis and strength training. She had injured her hamstring in Pilates, and "I had never let it heal." After traditional treatments – physical therapy, icing, oral steroids, injected steroids – failed to give her long-term relief, her physician sent her to Dr. Matthew DesJardins and Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers to try

**"Without it, I don't know what I would have done"**

PRP (platelet-rich plasma) therapy.

"When I went to Dr. DesJardins, he was very upfront with me. He did not give me any false hope." She has had two PRP injections. She was better after the first one, and Dr. DesJardins did the second one a few months

later. "To be honest, I think it worked better than either one of us hoped. I'm just so much better."

PRP didn't completely take away her pain. "Am I able to play tennis? Yes. Do I have to take

Advil to do it? Yes. But, it certainly is nothing that keeps me from doing anything I want."

Grover says, "There would have been no other treatment options for me except this. I am really glad for other people that they have this option. This obviously isn't something you do first, but without it, I don't know what I would have done."

"Dr. DesJardins was wonderful. He was just so worried about hurting me, and just so kind and nice, and so was the staff. I'm so grateful."

## After Hours Injury Clinic

560 South Loop Road, Edgewood, KY 41017

**Monday-Friday**

5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

**Saturday**

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

▶ **No appointment necessary**

### Our locations

- 560 South Loop Road  
Edgewood, KY 41017
- 2845 Chancellor Drive  
Crestview Hills, KY 41017
- 525 Alexandria Pike  
Southgate, KY 41071
- 7388 Turfway Road  
Suite 101  
Florence, KY 41042
- 238 Barnes Road  
Williamstown, KY 41097

### Our Ancillary Services

- **MRI**  
560 South Loop Road  
Edgewood, KY 41017  
859-301-0775
- **Physical Therapy**  
560 South Loop Road  
Edgewood, KY 41017  
859-301-0790  
2845 Chancellor Drive  
Crestview Hills, KY 41017  
859-426-5888  
525 Alexandria Pike  
Southgate, KY 41071  
859-441-0534

*Ortho Connect* is published throughout the year by Commonwealth Orthopaedic Centers for physicians, referral sources and the community.

*Editor:* Matthew T. DesJardins, M.D.

# Commonwealth

Orthopaedic Centers

560 South Loop Road  
Edgewood, KY 41017

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## Contact us

▶ To make an **APPOINTMENT**  
or reach a physician:  
**859-301-BONE (2663)**

▶ **Urgent REFERRAL LINE**  
for physicians:  
**859-301-9510**



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## Our physicians



### James D. Baker, M.D.

Hand, Wrist and Elbow Surgery  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### Nicholas T. Gates, M.D.

Orthopaedic Surgery and Sports Medicine of the Foot & Ankle  
*Interests: Sports injuries, ankle arthroscopy, Achilles tendon reconstruction and total ankle replacement*  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### Richard M. Hoblitzell, M.D.

General Orthopaedics, Adult Reconstructive Surgery including Joint Replacement, Sports Medicine, Fracture Repair and Evaluation and Management of Spine Disorders  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### John D. Bever, M.D.

Adult Reconstructive Surgery, including Joint Replacements, General Orthopaedics and Fracture Management  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### Michael A. Grefer, M.D.

General Orthopaedics  
*Interests: Treatment of neck & spinal disorders*  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### Bruce R. Holladay, M.D.

Sports Medicine, Knee, Shoulder & Elbow Arthroscopy and Reconstructive Procedures  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### James T. Bilbo, M.D.

Sports Medicine and Orthopaedic Surgery  
*Interests: Advanced arthroscopic surgery of the knee & shoulder, sports injuries, and injury prevention & rehabilitation.*  
*Head Team Physician at Northern Kentucky University*  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### R. Michael Greiwe, M.D.

Shoulder Replacement, Sports Injuries, Rotator Cuff Pathology and ACL Injuries  
*Interests: Tommy John surgery, advanced arthroscopic surgical techniques and shoulder reconstruction*  
*Board Eligible, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### Matthew T. Hummel, M.D.

Adult Reconstructive Surgery, including Joint Replacements  
*Interests: Total hip replacements, total knee replacements and sports medicine*  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### Matthew J. Connolly, D.P.M.

Non-Surgical Foot Care  
*Interests: Diabetic foot care and sport-specific orthotics.*  
*Board Certified, Podiatric Orthopaedic and Primary Podiatric Medicine.*



### Matthew S. Grunkemeyer, M.D.

General Orthopaedics  
*Interests: Fractures, sports injuries, joint replacement, carpal tunnel and hand disorders*  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### Raj V. Kakarlapudi, M.D.

Spine Surgery  
*Interests: Minimally invasive spine surgery, image-guided spine surgery*  
*Board Eligible, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### Matthew T. DesJardins, M.D.

Non-Surgical Sports Medicine and Spine  
*Interests: Pediatrics, ultrasound applications, platelet-rich plasma and spinal injections*  
*Board Certified, Family Practice, Certificate of Added Qualification in Sports Medicine*



### Forest T. Heis, M.D.

Advanced Arthroscopy of Knee & Shoulder, General & Complex Sports Medicine and Hip Fractures  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### John J. Larkin, M.D.

Shoulder and Knee Injuries, Arthritis and Reconstructive Total Knee Replacement and Work Related Injuries, Cartilage Repair and Transplantation  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*



### Thomas M. Due, M.D.

Treatment of Hand & Wrist Injuries and Disorders  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery and Hand Surgery*



### Michael D. O'Brien, M.D.

General Orthopaedics  
*Interests: Sports medicine, treatment of fractures & knee injuries, adult reconstructive surgery, total hip replacement, total knee replacement, arthroscopic knee surgery*  
*Board Certified, Orthopaedic Surgery*