

WHY LIGAMENTS DO NOT HEAL ON THEIR OWN

Alvin Stein, M.D. FACS

Prolotherapists agree that ligaments that are degenerated and lax are a source of significant skeletomuscular pain.

These ligaments hold bones in place so that they do not move inappropriately. If ligaments deteriorate, and become lax, the bones, that are supposed to be held in place, shift inappropriately, and the body perceives this shift as if it is coming apart, and we experience pain that lets us know there is a problem.

The question is: Why does the body not recognize the deteriorated or lax ligaments as an area that requires healing by the body on its own?

When we get a cut on our skin, or we injure a muscle, blood supply from that area creates sufficient inflammation in the injured area to alert the body's defense force, and healing forces rush in and start to heal the area.

Ligaments have very little blood supply because they do not need any major blood supply. Ligaments are static structures. That is they do their job of holding bones in place by being there. They do not have to contract the way a muscle contracts. They do not need a major blood supply.

When the ligaments deteriorate, it usually comes in small pieces breaking apart or stretching out. This type of minor deterioration does not send out a signal to the body to alert the healing forces to come to the aid of that ligament. We need blood supply and irritation or inflammation to alert the body to heal an injury.

Since this does not happen in ligaments, it is necessary for an alternative method to be employed to get the body to repair these ligaments.

Prolotherapy offers this alternative method. It creates a bruise or localized injury to the ligamentous tissue that is damaged. The body responds by increasing the blood supply to the area, sending in cells, enzymes, and substances to remove the damaged tissue. This promotes the deposit of new collagen, which matures into the new ligament tissue or tendon tissue, which is needed for the repair. Mother Nature described this healing process and it is as basic as basic science can be. The process of wound healing is described in the basic physiology textbooks. Prolotherapy seeks to engage Mother Nature in this healing process that enables our bodies to heal with a little well directed guidance.