



# PERFORMING ARTS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP



**ORTHOPAEDIC SECTION**  
AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION



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*The Science of Healing. The Art of Caring.*

## Prolotherapy – CITATION SUMMARY

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Periodically we're asked about prolotherapy by a dancer who is desperate to be well and avoiding more invasive intervention. It's a difficult answer as the literature is limited with respect to randomized clinical trials and systematic reviews are mixed with respect to treatment efficacy.

Prolotherapy is an alternative therapy for chronic musculoskeletal injury including joint laxity. Most commonly, a dextrose sclerosing solution is used which may contain lidocaine as well. Post-injection inflammation, pain, and stiffness are frequently reported. The mechanical effects of prolotherapy injections compared to saline and no treatment following induced ligament stretch injury were investigated with rats (Jensen et al., 2008). While the prolotherapy group ligaments were found to have increased cross-sectional areas, there were no differences between groups in laxity or mechanical properties, and no change in collagen fibril density or diameter. Therefore it is unclear what effect prolotherapy has on tissue in the long-term.

[Return to Menu](#)