

# Introduction of Prolotherapy in the Caribbean

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In January 2009, I introduced Prolotherapy in the twin island state of Antigua and Barbuda. Optimum Health Clinic Ltd. (my private practice), situated at Belmont (Surgical and Medical) Complex was the site where this dynamic and extremely effective therapy was birthed for the first time in the West Indies. (See *Figure 1.*) I am happy to report that Prolotherapy is growing in popularity on the islands. I will share two success stories with you.



**Figure 1. Optimum Health Clinic Ltd., where Prolotherapy recently got its start in the West Indies.**

My first patient, Charmaine a 51 year-old perimenopausal, primiparous woman, had severe degenerative disease of the knees (bilaterally) for a number of years. The pain was refractory to NSAIDs and she had even had local steroid injections done; which too was ineffective. Charmaine did a course of Prolotherapy on her knees. (See *Figure 2.*) One day while clearing my post box, I saw Charmaine leaving work carrying a pile of books. She limped slowly across the car park. Being concerned, I inquired from her the reason for her limp. She smiled and said, “Doc, I have no pain. My only problem is that I have to keep reminding myself that I have no pain and that I need to get rid of this programmed habit to limp.” She then showed me her limp free “stage” walk. With the type of degeneration Charmaine had, she couldn’t fake it, even if she wanted to. I smiled and thought to myself, “Amazing!” This was what I needed as a practitioner ...a vote of confidence.

Pete, a 47 year-old man that I have been working with for three years for obesity, diabetes and hypertension, had been experiencing moderate to severe left hip pain for about two years. Pete worked in the field as a construction engineer and fell from a ladder. Pete benefited greatly from Prolotherapy, reporting one month after one treatment of Prolotherapy that the pain that had been his constant companion for two years is no longer present. He remarked that minutes to days after treatment he felt “a pulling of muscles” and greater range of motion as time progressed. Pete was given a solution of Sarapin and dextrose proliferants. A second treatment was given within a month. He has continued to be pain free since his last treatment a few months ago. Pete has been discharged thanks to Prolotherapy. By the way, Pete has lost almost 100 pounds and both his hypertension and

diabetes are under control without medication. “Congratulations Pete!



**Figure 2. Dr. Humphreys performing Prolotherapy to the lateral knee.**

I have found in my experience that dextrose does very well as a stand alone proliferant but benefits are augmented in some instances with the addition of other proliferants.

Prolotherapy is no doubt a valuable form of pain management. It has changed the landscape of medical practice in the Caribbean. Invariably, it has proven more effective than oral medication therapy (NSAIDs) and steroidal therapy, which studies now show hamper the biosynthesis and gene expression of collagen and proteoglycan of chondrocytes.<sup>1</sup> (See *Figure 3.*)



**Figure 3. Prolotherapy brings renewed hope for pain patients in the West Indies.**

Prolotherapy has even caused a stir in the medical community in Antigua and Barbuda with increased referrals from physicians. As a matter of fact, while preparing this article, my medical assistant informed me that the president of the local medical association has made an appointment for his first Prolotherapy treatment.

I must express profound thanks to my Prolotherapy instructor, Dr. Ross Hauser, whose remarkable teaching skills both theoretically and clinically proved invaluable. (See Figure 4.) I commend Dr. Ross Hauser and the staff from Caring Medical and the other forerunners in Prolotherapy...Antigua thanks you...the Caribbean thanks you! ■

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Fujii K, et al. Effects of NSAID on collagen and proteoglycan synthesis of cultured chondrocytes. *J-Rheumatol-Suppl.* 1989 Aug; 1828-31.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

As you will read in this patient's letter, Antigua is already experiencing the power of Prolotherapy in the Caribbean.

#### A LETTER OF THANKS FROM PATIENT TO DR. J. V. A. HUMPHREYS IN ANTIGUA

Hello Dr. Humphreys,

It is now four weeks after my first treatment and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for introducing me to Prolotherapy treatment.

As you know, when I came to your office three months ago I complained of severe back pain, pain radiating down my left leg and tingling in my toes of my left foot. I have had this problem for over six months. I tried chiropractic care, acupuncture and massage with no resolution of my herniated disc problems.



**Figure 4. Dr. Ross Hauser and Dr. Humphreys at Caring Medical, Oak Park, Illinois in 2008.**

I was unable to perform any activity, let alone exercise. Walking, standing, or sitting in the same place for a long period of time caused an increase in my pain. My doctor prescribed several different types of pain killers, which I had to take every day, was the only thing that gave me some relief. As you are aware, these medications are known stimulators of connective tissue breakdown and cause my condition to get worse. My doctor also advised that I may have to do surgery to cure my herniated disc. However, because of your treatment, I will not have to do the surgery.

I am happy to report that after three weeks of my first Prolotherapy treatment I am about 90% cured! Two weeks before my first treatment I discontinued taking all anti-inflammatory drugs and I haven't taken any since. My lower back pain is much better and I don't have any pain radiating down my leg or tingling in my toes. I am now able to get back to my usual activities of walking, standing, exercising and dancing!

I am so excited about this treatment that I am telling everyone I know that is having problems with back pain, or any other joint pain, about the Prolotherapy treatment. Once again, thank you so much for helping me and with the help of God you will do wonders with this procedure.

Thank you God bless you,

C.T.  
Antigua