

POINT GREY UPDATE

Massage

MAJORITY OF MONEY IN HEALTH CARE IS SPENT ON RELIEF OF PAIN

Over 80% of money spent on health care is for the relief of pain. This includes everything from surgery to drugs. Massage Therapy is a viable tool in the treatment of pain and disability, and is quickly becoming recognized as such. In British Columbia Massage Therapy accounts for only 1/4 of 1% of the total money spent on health care in 1989.

Pain. We all have experienced it at some time in our lives. A large percentage of complaints that cause a person to seek medical care involve the soft tissues of the body. Soft tissue pain can result from injury, irritation, overuse, disease, inflammation, and so on.

In order for us, as massage practitioners, to understand the phenomenon of soft tissue pain and disability, there are 5 principles we follow to make an adequate evaluation, and plan appropriate treatment.

1) Ischemia (lack of blood to affected areas) results in hypersensitivity of tissues. Ischemic tissue is tender to touch. With ischemia comes hypercontraction of muscle fibers (muscle tightness). This muscle tension leads to more ischemia which leads to more muscle contraction, making it difficult to stop the

pain pattern.

2) Trigger points are areas of low neurological activity that, when palpated, become highly neurologically active sites with secondary referred pain patterns, to other parts of the body. Trigger points have the capability of causing ischemia in the referred area, as well.

3) Nerve compression / entrapment is a major consideration in the treatment of pain. Nerve compression results from pressure on a nerve by osseous or cartilagenous tissue, such as between vertebrae. Nerve entrapment results from pressure on a nerve by soft tissue, such as between or within muscles. The ratio for nerve compression versus nerve entrapment is 1:1000.

4) Postural distortion causes imbalances in the muscular tonus system. This imbalance causes increased tension which can result in movements of the body off its natural coronal and mid-sagittal planes.

5) Dysfunctional biomechanics are the faulty movement patterns that occur because of the imbalances of the muscular system. It is imperative that these movements be corrected in order to relieve the hypertonicity of the soft tissue.

Any of these or all of the above can be caused by direct trauma, abuse, misuse, fatigue, anxiety, impatience, anger and depression. Once the neuromuscular pattern is altered, normal biomechanics is altered, postural distortion results, causing nerve entrapment, trigger points and ischemia in the soft tissue.

Treatment, through Massage and Neuromuscular Therapy is aimed at eliminating the hypercontraction of muscles, restoring proper biomechanics, restoring flexibility of the soft tissues, and finally rebuilding the strength and the endurance of the dysfunctional tissue. Together with appropriate diet and nutritional support, Massage Therapy is an exceptional, cost effective, form of health care.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR REFERRALS

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