

Articulation

Hanneken Full Potential Physical Therapy Newsletter May 2010

PHYSICAL THERAPY – THE PRO-ACTIVE APPROACH

Physical therapy is a diverse profession. It has evolved and changed as the needs of people and society have changed. It now offers specialized care designed for orthopedic and neurological deficiencies in people of all ages. It even offers training to enhance your ability to make your best performance better with regard to your sport or recreational pursuit.

From this viewpoint, what does physical therapy have to offer to people who have raised a family, logged some long hours making a living, had some traumas, and even gained a few pounds? These people may have nagging communication coming from their bodies and they are not quite sure what to do about it or how much to acknowledge those complaints. The 50+ generation has been told they hurt because "you're just getting older." Or the other mainstay that gives you very little control over your body's changes is, "its arthritis." A couple of cruel one liners because it sounds like there are minimal options available except to medicate and/or curtail what you enjoy doing.

Aging is a complex process and unique influences are operating in each of us based on our medical history and genetics. These issues must always be taken into consideration when advising someone. However, to ascribe "getting older" and "it's just arthritis" as the primary sources for your pain is too simplistic for most people. There are other factors that need to be checked before you throw in the towel and acquiesce. One fundamental need the body must satisfy on a regular basis relates to posture and alignment. When proper posture and

alignment are unknowingly not ideal over a sustained period of time, an environment can be created where pain begins to emerge.

Pain, in itself, is hard to define and quantify. Orthopedic pain (pain from joints, muscles, ligaments etc.) generally originates from pressure. When pressure builds on a tissue or joint, sensory receptors begin to communicate with your spinal cord and this registers as something ranging from dull to sharp pain in your brain. You could have inflammatory pain, but without recent trauma, inflammatory pain would not be the primary source of the problem.

The problem is really pressure. This is the nemesis of people as they get older. Pressure is the phenomenon of torsional (twisting) changes in key segments of the body. This pressure causes compression on tissues and joints with pain eventually being the result. A physical therapist understands the torsional patterns that tend to build over time in the body. He/she can offer renewed hope for many people caught in that vague position of hurting but

not having a true target to hit with the proverbial, "exercise hammer." Often, the area that is hurting is compensating due to other influences that need to be identified. The irritable area has grown tired of the unchanging scene so it uses pain as its only recourse to get some attention on the situation. When we medicate with indiscriminate use of anti-inflammatory/pain medication, we suppress the very response that is trying to tell us something is not right.

The pro-active approach is to seek a consult with your physician and discuss your concerns about your body's changing landscape. A good question to ask yourself is, "if I stay on this course of self care, where will I be in five years?" What kind of picture are you painting for yourself? The good news is that there is a better approach. One where your effort will be a wise investment in the only vehicle (your body) you are never going to be able to trade in. Talk to your doctor about a referral to a physical therapist. Start investing in your body's portfolio. It has a great rate of return!

Vincent Hanneken P.T.



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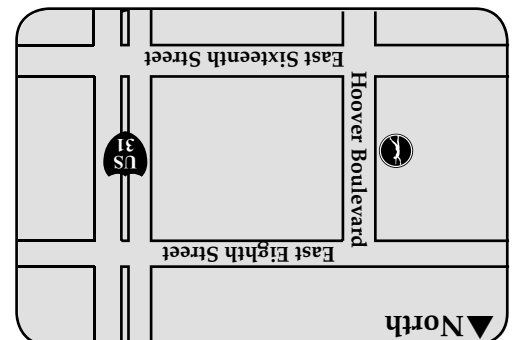
What Our Clients Have To Say:

“(Before Physical Therapy) I was in constant pain, unable to sit, stand or sleep comfortably. I was also unable to run. (Now) I am pain free for the first time in two years. I am also training for my first half marathon. Without BJ’s help I would not be able to do any of the things I am doing now!”

-----Ashley Rea

For more patient testimonials, please visit fullpotentialpt.com!

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