

A New Approach To Treating Muscular Pain.

The traditional medical community does not specialize in muscle pain. There is little research devoted to it and very few doctors who specialize in it. More and more people, however, are experiencing everything from back pain to shoulder pain to neck and even finger and foot pain.

Now there is a revolutionary new process for correcting muscular imbalances in the body. It has dramatically improved functional capabilities in all age groups, along with elevating sports performance and career longevity in athletes. This biomechanical-based therapy is called Muscle Activation Techniques (MAT)TM. This innovative treatment was developed by Greg Rosokpf, who has his Masters in Exercise Physiology and is the Biomechanics Consultant for various professional sports teams, including the Denver Broncos and Utah Jazz.

MAT is designed to eliminate the muscle and joint pain by correcting your body alignment. No matter what type of exercise – golf, tennis, or just walking down your stairs – MAT addresses the weak links in your muscular system and thereby allows your body to function more efficiently while minimizing pain.

Conventional forms of therapy suggest that we should stretch our tight and aching muscles to help relieve our muscular pain. These forms of therapy recognize muscle tightness as the primary factor that leads to pain and/or injury. Recent research, however, suggests that stretching might, in fact, cause more problems than it solves. In the recent article, “No Bending Or Twisting” (*U.S. News and World Report*, 6/21/04) researchers found that increased flexibility in women may be to blame for the increase in knee, ankle and other soft tissue injuries that women incur far more than men. Flexibility might even help explain why women are up to ten times as likely as men to tear the anterior cruciate ligament in their knees, and four times as likely to have serious ankle sprains. MAT looks at muscle weakness, rather than muscle tightness as the cause of limitations in range of motion. Muscle tightness is not only secondary, but it is the end product of reciprocal muscle weakness.. When our body recognizes instability (muscle weakness) it is designed to protect itself and sends messages to surrounding muscles to tighten up in an attempt to support and protect the joint. A good example of this is when we walk across ice. What does our body do? It tightens to give us a sense of stability and protect itself from injury.

Researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found only six studies designed to isolate the effects of stretching and none showed a link between stretching more and getting hurt less. Researcher Stacy Ingraham of the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities says, “More pliable muscles might cause more injuries than they prevent, especially if you stretch before you exercise.” Jay Blahnik, author of *Full-Body Flexibility*, says that one study showed that marathon runners who stretched had a higher rate of injuries than those that didn’t.

So why is stretching our tight muscles possibly hurting more than helping us? Stretching muscle fibers makes them less stable through their newfound range of motion. With mobility we must have stability for injury and pain not to occur. Combining a unique muscle therapy and range of motion analysis, MAT restores your body's alignment as well as allowing for pain-free movement and higher performance levels by using a systematic evaluation procedure of checks and balances correlating limitations in range of motion to muscle weakness. MAT treats weak muscles with manual palpation and isometric exercises in order to address the instability. In turn, the protective contractions diminish, which typically results in an increase in stability through the range of motion. The results are typically long lasting and can be followed up with home isometric exercises. Increasing mobility combined with joint stability is fundamental to the MAT program and it the foundation to improving people's ability to function. It is the missing link in many therapy and exercise procedures.

Kristin Menapace, M.S., MAT Specialist, A.C.E., Licensed Wellness Coach, is a Health and Wellness Professional. She has helped many of her clients achieve their health and wellness goals. She can be contacted directly at 949-554-8054 or Kristin@muscle-motion.com.