



Did You Know We Use The McKenzie Method?

Physical Therapy & Beyond



McKenzie Neck and Back Pain Approach

The McKenzie method is a scientifically-proven system used to treat a variety of neck and back problems. It has become one of the foundations in spine care around the world. It enables most patients to recover from pain and disability, restore function, and learn personal skills for managing future problems. Our facility has McKenzie certified therapists on staff.

What is the McKenzie approach? How is it different and how will it help my patient?

Definition:

In the McKenzie approach to mechanical spinal disorders, physical therapy evaluation and treatment are based on a thorough history and movement testing:

- A series of test movements and positions is applied in a controlled movement testing.
- Symptom behavior is observed before, during and after repeated movement testing.
- The movements/positions which reduce the number of symptoms are used as treatment and as the home exercise program. This includes education in the correct posture and body mechanics.
- If no movements or positions can be found to reduce, centralize, or abolish the symptoms, then other treatment options will be investigated prior to referring back to the physician for further recommendations.

How is it different?

- Mechanical therapy is superior to traditional therapy, i.e., hot packs, ultrasound, and electric stimulation, because it is a dynamic treatment approach which empowers the patient to treat himself, as opposed to providing passive modalities.
- It educates the patient about what causes his pain, which activities he's currently involved in which contributes to the pain, how to treat himself, and how to prevent further occurrences.
- It is cost effective in that fewer treatments are necessary, using less costly modalities.
- It provides an evaluation tool to determine if the patient's symptoms will benefit from mechanical treatment therapy or if they should be referred for further testing.

Why use Mechanical Therapy?

- Low back pain tends to be self-limiting:
 - 42% of patients are better in one week
 - 86% of patients are better in one month
 - 92% of patients are better in two months
- While low back pain is self-limiting, it is also episodic, with recurrences becoming progressively more severe.
- Treatment must be provided while the patient is symptomatic and can learn which movements reduce and which movements produce symptoms.
- Goals of Mechanical Therapy:
 - Reduce pain and deformity
 - Maintain the reduction with education and posture
 - Recover function
 - Prevent future episodes

"Centralization of pain was found to occur commonly in patients with low back pain and leg pain when mechanically evaluated in the manner described by McKenzie. **Those patients whose pain centralized had a high incidence of good or excellent treatment outcomes, whereas those whose pain did not centralize had much worse outcomes.**"

Donelson R. Silva G, Murphy K "Centralization phenomenon. Its usefulness in evaluating and treating referred pain" Spine 15(3) 211-213. 1990.