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Newsletter

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A New Frontier of Pain Relief

Chiropractors offer a variety of ways to treat muscle and joint pain without resorting to medication. Now, some doctors are also recommending therapeutic ultrasound to relieve pain, reduce inflammation and accelerate healing. Find out if this therapy is right for you. Almost everyone is familiar with ultrasound – most equate it with use during pregnancy, or to visualize organs and help diagnose disease. This type of ultrasound is known as diagnostic ultrasound. What you probably don't know is that the exact same technology is even more commonly used in therapeutic ultrasound. The intensity output of both diagnostic and therapeutic ultrasound is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. As compared to the rare or occasional use of diagnostic ultrasound (as in pregnancy), therapeutic ultrasound is used two to three times per week for five to 10 minutes per session. Many other medical devices use this technology, but in different waves, including lasers and larger units in hospitals and chiropractic clinics.

How Does Therapeutic Ultrasound Work?

Ultrasound therapy has been used for more than 60 years in the therapeutic management of pain and musculoskeletal injuries. While it has been around for decades, significant evidence of its favorable biophysical effects has only recently begun to accrue. Therapeutic ultrasound utilizes sound waves – just like diagnostic ultrasound – to penetrate the body and help heal pain and inflammation. But how does ultrasound really work? Ultrasound is really just sound waves that vibrate at more than 1 million vibrations per second, far above the threshold of detection for the human ear; therefore, ultrasound can be thought of as high-frequency vibration. These sound waves penetrate human tissue with two effects. The thermal effect occurs as the sound waves heat the tissue it penetrates, and the non-thermal effect is the tissues actually vibrating very rapidly in response to the sound waves. Ultrasound waves penetrate deep into tissue to relieve pain, reduce inflammation, increase blood flow, reduce muscle spasm, accelerate healing and increase range of motion.

Therapeutic ultrasound can penetrate your tissue up to 3–4 inches. This is one of the only mechanisms available that can give this sort of deep treatment. When receiving therapeutic ultrasound treatment, gel is always used to conduct the sound waves to the desired area of treatment. Available now are specially medicated gels which contain natural anti-inflammatory ingredients. These gels contain all-natural ingredients: eucalyptus, peppermint, menthol and lavender. During your therapeutic ultrasound treatment, a process takes place called phonophoresis. Phonophoresis occurs when the sound waves transport the natural ingredients from the gel through your skin layers to the area of pain and inflammation, causing you to feel immediate relief and a soothing, cool sensation.

Communicate with Your Chiropractor

Whether you're fighting through traffic, paying the monthly bills, dealing with the noisy next-door neighbor or struggling with illness or disease, it can all add up to a considerable amount of stress. Stress is basically what we feel whenever we are faced with a difficult, unpleasant or challenging situation, and the way we deal with all this stress can substantially influence our overall health and well-being.

If stress is affecting your life, it's time to make an appointment with a doctor of chiropractic. Here's why: A study in the *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics* (JMPT) examined the contribution of stress as a potential disease trigger among 138 chiropractic patients attending one of 10 chiropractic clinics. Patients completed two questionnaires that asked about how their current stress affected their ability to function emotionally, mentally and physically.

Results showed that nearly one in three patients viewed their lives as moderately to severely stressful, and more than 50% felt that stress had a moderate or severe impact on their current health problem. Nearly three-quarters (71%) of the patients said that it would be helpful if their chiropractic care included strategies to help them cope with stress.

Chiropractic care might be just what you need to help relieve some of that stress in your life. And remember, evidence suggests that low back pain, a condition that chiropractors are experts at managing, may be caused or worsened by stress. So talk to your chiropractor about stress and about all of your health care needs. Trust and communication are important in any relationship, but perhaps no more so than in the relationship between patient and doctor. After all, you're placing your health and wellness in their hands.

Jamison J. Stress: the chiropractic patient's self-perceptions. *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, July/August 1999: Vol. 22, No. 6, pp395-98.

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U.S. Child Trampoline Injuries on the Rise

Trampoline injuries have more than doubled in the past decade and continue to rise, according to a Rhode Island Hospital study. The researchers examined data from 2001 and 2002 and found that an average of 75,000 children per year were seen in emergency departments across the country. However, the data from 2000 through 2005 showed even higher rates -- 531,378 trampoline-related injuries over the study period, or an average of 88,563 each year, according to the findings presented at the American Academy of Pediatrics annual meeting and published in the *Academic Emergency Medicine*. Ninety-five percent of the trampoline injuries occurred on home trampolines, said Dr. James Linakis, a pediatric emergency physician at Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence, R.I. "Our first study on this subject gave us reason for concern, and the need to send a warning to parents," Linakis said in a statement. "Clearly this new study indicates even higher rates of injury than first thought." The most common injuries were soft tissue -- 256,509 -- while fractures and dislocations were the next -- 168,402. So let's be careful out there.

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Exercise Most Effective to Prevent Falls

Exercise proved most effective at improving elderly quality-of-life, better than education or a home safety assessment, says a Taiwan study. Dr. Mau-Roung Lin, of the Institute of Injury Prevention and Control, Taipei Medical University, in Taiwan, also examined the secondary effects of these programs on functional balance, daily activity, fear of falling and depression level.

Participation in the study was open to people ages 65 and older who had required medical attention for a fall within the previous four weeks. Participants were assigned to one of the three fall prevention program groups, and quality-of-life was then assessed according to the World Health Organization's Quality of Life guidelines, focusing on four domains: physical capacity, psychological well-being, social relationships and environment. Although all programs contributed to some quality-of-life improvements, the results were significantly higher in the exercise training group, according to the study published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics*. Exercise training participation also led to improvements in functional reach, balance and fear of falling, said the researchers.

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Children, Teens Need to go to Bed Earlier

Children and teens who got used to “sleeping in” during summer need to develop better sleep habits before school starts, warn U.S. sleep experts. Pediatric sleep expert Dr. Daniel G. Glaze, of Texas Children’s Hospital in Houston, notes that just as a driver wouldn’t start a trip with a half-full tank of gas, children and teens need to obtain a proper amount of sleep to complete the school day successfully. “Many children, and especially teens, alter their sleep-wake schedules and maintain a later bedtime in summer,” says Glaze.

“It is difficult to advance your bedtime and, once a schedule has been established, it may take days or weeks to develop a new schedule. It can’t be done overnight. Not unexpectedly, for the first weeks of school, many children and teens do not obtain a proper amount of sleep.” Ralph Downey, chief of sleep medicine at Loma Linda University Medical Center, in California, notes that many teens face the same sleep adjustment as many travelers. Downey suggests teens adjust their bedtimes by going to bed earlier each day to help make the adjustment and get at least nine hours of sleep.

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Distracted Drivers Distract Others

A U.S. doctor was observed looking at a patient’s X-rays while driving, says a survey asking people to describe examples of distracted driving. The survey, by the American Iron and Steel Institute, asks participants to describe examples of distracted driving they have witnessed. For example, one respondent recounts witnessing a driver talking on a Bluetooth headset, putting on makeup, eating a fast-food breakfast and looking at a piece of paper in the seat next to her while driving. It is estimated that nearly 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes involved some form of driver inattention or distracting activities within three seconds before the event, according to a report by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. To avoid distractions:

- + Ask passengers to keep conversation to a minimum.
- + Deal with potential distractions before hitting the road, such as eating, putting on makeup, combing hair, reading and checking messages.
- + Manage music ahead of time by pre-programming the car radio. Adjust stations, CDs or iPOD only when the car is stopped.
- + Turn off the cell phone while driving and pull over to make an urgent call.

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Terrible Twos Can Be Good Sign

At a young age, a child’s defiant behavior toward a mother may not be bad because it may reflect a child’s emerging autonomy, says a U.S. study. Researchers at the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Michigan videotaped 119 mostly middle-class mothers as they interacted with their 14- to 27-month-old children.

Mothers were asked to have their children avoid a set of attractive toys and, when play time was over, to get their children to help them clean up those toys they had been allowed to use. Based on the taped interactions, the researchers coded children’s behaviors, categorizing them as being defiant, ignoring requests or being willingly compliant. Children were most likely to be defiant and least likely to ignore requests when their mothers had few symptoms of depression, and when children were positively interested in their mothers during the interaction, according to the study published in the journal *Child Development*. Children with mothers who had symptoms of depression were more likely to ignore requests and less likely to respond with defiance.

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When It Comes to Walking, It’s All Good

Walking is good, whether the outcome benefits blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, joint problems or mental health, says a U.S. expert. “Getting out there and taking a walk is what it’s all about,” Dr. James Levine, and a Mayo Clinic expert on obesity. “You don’t have to join a gym, you don’t have to check your pulse. You just have to switch off the TV, get off the sofa and go for a walk.” Physicians at Shinshu University Graduate School of Medicine in Matsumoto, Japan, determined that high-intensity interval walking may protect against high blood pressure and decreased muscle strength among older people, according to an editorial in the *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*. Over five months, the Japanese researchers studied 246 adults who engaged in either no walking or moderate to high-intensity walking. The group who engaged in high-intensity walking experienced the most significant improvement in their health, the researchers found. In his editorial, Levine says the study lends credence to the notion that walking is a legitimate, worthy mode of exercise for all people.

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