

Thoughts on Pain, the Spine, and Degeneration

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There are only two causes of pain: chemical and mechanical (or a combination). It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that when you have a chemical problem, you should either swallow something or get a shot of something. And if you have a mechanical problem, you will need a mechanic. There are two types of medical mechanics: surgeons and chiropractors.

Dr. John Triano of the Texas Back Institute reported during a recent conference of chiropractic doctors in Orlando: "Vertebral subluxations will cause tissue to be crushed, and the related pain is created by the tissue which has been damaged." How novel! This reality, that pain is caused because of tissue damage, is important because we all know there are two types of tissue: hard and soft. Hard is not flexible, while soft is, and each has its predetermined range of motion and resting position. The spinal column, like all joints, is composed of and dependent on tissues working together, including: "hard" vertebra (with the occiput and sacrum); "soft" intervertebral disks; the spinal nerves (including the spinal chord); the intravertebral and paravertebral soft tissues (muscles, ligaments and tendons); and the spinal joints (including the sacroiliac).

The spine is a micro and macro joint, designed to function within its predetermined range of motion, and rest within a predetermined location. Every joint has multiple specific ranges of motion (flexion, extension, right and left lateral flexion, and right and left rotation), and combinations of each.

"Joint pathology" is any malfunctioning joint outside or within its specific predetermined tolerance. "Subluxation" is a medical term identifying a joint malfunctioning inside its predetermined range of motion.

Genetic and pathological joint morphology allows specific joint motion. Every tissue's "move" is possible because of each tissue's ability to compress and stretch within its design without breaking. In motion, there is always a direct corresponding stretch or compression of the opposing tissue being stretched or compressed. If the tissue is "compressed to the degree of crush" or "stretched to the point of tear," the tissue will be damaged. The damaged tissue will cause pain in a direct relation to the amount of damage and existing scar tissue.

Damaged tissue heals with the formation of scar tissue. Scar tissue is less elastic, uniquely less able to be damaged when compressed or stretched, and will not produce pain. This abnormal tissue creates abnormal movement patterns, and is less likely to create pain from compression and stretching.

All tissue, hard or soft, will heal in the position and location it's in. A broken bone (hard tissue) will heal in the position it's in at rest. Unless the bone is properly realigned, it will heal in the wrong position. The same is true for soft tissue. Vertebral subluxations cause damage; there is no safe amount of joint pathology. When any tissue associated with two or more vertebra are compressed or stretched beyond their tolerance, there will be damage. If tissue remains in an abnormal position while it heals, the crushed tissue will heal compressed with scar tissue, and the torn tissue will heal stretched with scar tissue, creating faulty movement patterns and permanent joint

weakness.

Tissue dysfunction always affects the body's center of alignment and posture. If it is not treated in time, patients will require periodic attention for the rest of their lives to try to control the degeneration. Treatments that aim only at the site of symptoms are bound to fail, unless additional efforts are made to address the total mechanical structure.

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