

How MAT and PRRT Eliminate Pain

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"No pain, No gain. Pain is weakness leaving the body."

These are two common statements used by all of us as we go through the stages of exercise, training and getting in shape.

The truth is, pain is an indicator that something is wrong.

It is your body's way of communicating to you to stop and take notice.

There are two stages of an injury: Acute and Chronic. The acute phase is defined from 0 to 6 weeks. After six weeks it is considered chronic. If you seek help within that first 6 weeks the injury is usually easier to treat, just because it is very likely that it remained local to the area of injury. Chronic injuries, on the other hand, have allowed time for the body to adapt and compensate. This means other areas of the body are usually involved because they are needed to help out. Physical therapy is beneficial to both acute and chronic pain.

Injuries happen. A tweak in the shoulder as a result of over training for a particular event will cause pain. Many of you will ignore the tweak and continue to lift weights or swim. You are able to continue because your body is a great compensator and will allow you to continue, for a while. As you continue with your workouts, you continue to reinforce the compensatory pattern and get a change in the musculoskeletal system. When you run out of compensation, you will start to feel pain.

At this point, you will typically seek help or take time off from working out and hope the injury gets better on its own. Sometimes when you take time off, you get lucky and the pain goes away and never comes back. More typically, the body has some type of adaptive change and as you return to activity, the injury returns, or a new injury appears. Unless you have done something to the joint itself, the normal response to an injury is for the muscles to tighten up.

The tightened muscles cause the following responses: protection, overwork, compensation, and inhibition response. With protection, the body recognizes instability. One example is the shoulder, if you can't raise your shoulder, if your body senses it will be unstable in a certain range over your head, specific muscles will keep the shoulder from going into the unstable range. In overwork, the injured muscle is still required to contract and be used because you are still trying to do a particular movement or activity, like bench pressing or freestyle swimming. Compensation means that other muscles perform the function of the injured muscle. As you continue to use the injured shoulder and the primary muscle involved in the motion is injured, the body will get another muscle that has similar function to take over as a primary muscle. The secondary muscle being used can cause tendonitis. Finally, the inhibition response causes the injured muscle to lose its ability to fire or contract causing further dysfunction.

Two new and innovative techniques have been introduced to the area of injury rehabilitation and physical therapy. What some physical therapists are finding is that the standard ice and stretch doesn't always work or is very slow in aiding recovery. One such technique, called Muscle Activation Technique, treats muscles that are inhibited and are not firing (or contracting) fully. When the muscle isn't working properly and one tries to exercise to strengthen it, it doesn't work. In reality, the muscle may become more inhibited or shut down. Another technique, called Pain Reflex Release Technique, examines how muscle guarding or splinting causes an increase in muscle tension, pain, and a secondary effect of inhibition that will appear as muscle weakness. Using MAT and PRRT can correct and balance isolated muscle imbalances, allowing you to become pain-free.

*Pain is not weakness leaving your body.
It is telling you there is something wrong.*