

It's Not Magic

By Chris Melmoth, BCTMB, NREMT

Some people think this type of work is magic because they were told by their healthcare practitioner that their injury either would never improve, or cannot be improved without surgery. But then they do a few of my soft tissue treatments and finally find relief like never before. Well, its not magic... its just a specific way of working that many healthcare practitioners are not aware of. In the end, its simple massage therapy... and it works.

Here's how... Whenever there is cellular damage in any tissue of the body, there is an inflammatory response. This damage may be from an injury to a specific area, from a surgery, or it can be internally in the tissues, organs, joints, or arteries as a result of systemic oxidation (a lack of oxygen in or around the cells). Whatever the cause... wherever there is inflammation, the body lays down fibrin (protein fibers that are a part of the blood clotting process) that naturally help to heal the tissue damage. This is good and bad. It's good because the area is technically healed. But it is bad because fibrin is laid down in a very disorganized way that results in a more dense, weak, and poorly circulated tissue. What we are left with are "myofascial restrictions", also called adhesions, scar tissue, or other fibrous lesion, that prevent the body from accessing that area with proper circulation. This then creates structural imbalances & biochemical stagnations in the area that can lead to pain & stiffness, and will remain this way until it is "remodeled".

Normally when we feel excessive amounts of pain, this is due to irritated nerves from chemical in the area that are related to inflammation coming either from acute trauma, chronic trauma (scar tissue), or from blood stagnation.

So how do we get rid of this problem? Well, if this "fibrosis" is somewhere deep in the body, we may be able to take natural fibrinolytics, which are foods & supplements that contain systemic enzymes that can help to dissolve fibrin build-up. But if the issues are near the surface of the skin, we can use manual soft tissue therapy techniques to break down & realign these scar tissues.

Even if the issue is from a very old injury, your body still wants to heal it. You just have to give it the right tools... the right circulation! We have to "open up" that area... that tendon, muscle, connective tissue... and allow fresh healing nutrients to circulate into it that will naturally remove any acids or metabolic waste materials that are the true source of the inflammation, pain, and stiffness.

You've probably heard that the key to health is movement... "Move it or lose it", right? This is true. But more specifically, the key is optimal circulation. So that's what we are trying to achieve with this work... circulation deep into and around the chronic injury site or place of tension. To accomplish this, I use a variety of hands-on manual (massage) techniques, and some stretch & strengthening exercises... getting the old stagnant fluid out of the area, increasing fresh new healing circulation into the area, stimulating the healing process, and restoring the tissue to as close to 100% as possible.

Does it work on everybody and every situation? ...No. But either during the initial consultation, or within the first few visits, we will know whether or not these techniques will work for you. If not, I will try to point you in the direction of the appropriate practitioner, or other best option. If it is determined that this work IS appropriate for your particular situation, you will experience significant & permanent progress within the first three sessions. If you are coming simply for general maintenance, you may reschedule as often as you like. For specific injury treatment, it is recommended that you come once per week, no more, no less. But however often you visit, the work that is done will be permanent. It may not get any better without further treatment, but it will not get any worse.

Now, before we can remodel the area with my soft tissue work, we must ensure that area is free of any excessive swelling or pooled blood. These “stagnations” can have various causes, from sedentary lifestyle & poor diet to difficult menstruation & hormone imbalances. Before I can properly access the deeper layers of tissue, these biochemistry issues MUST be cleaned up first... The blood and extra-cellular fluids in the affected area needs to be thinned out. If this is the case in your situation, I will suggest ways to address the problem. If this is not first achieved, there will be too much pain for you to deal with, and the integrity of the vessels in the area will likely be weaker and more susceptible to injury from the soft tissue work.

So, if you have a structural issue somewhere in or on your body that you have been dealing with... whether it's a new issue, or something that's been bugging you for years... if there is something in the tissue that is restricting your daily life or interrupting your sleep, causing pain, flexibility issues, stiffness, or other imbalance... this is specifically what I treat, and this work just might be your answer.