

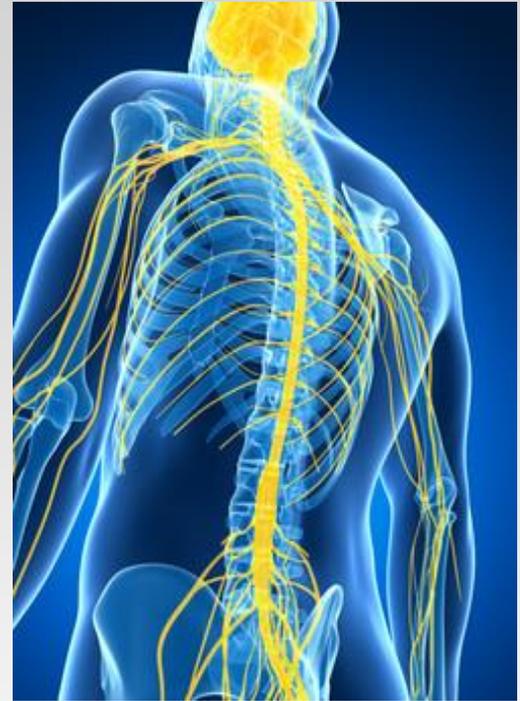


Health and Performance Centre

January Fitness Newsletter 2016

Neuromeningeal manipulation therapy

At its core, physiotherapy aims to get people back to their normal lives, by alleviating symptoms of pain and physical discomfort. Conventionally, there is a strong focus on a biomechanical approach to rehabilitation, loosening tight ligaments around joints and strengthening muscles in order to restore proper function. More frequently than not, this approach is sufficient to eliminate pain; however, there are other strategies that can be employed that may prove to be more efficient for some patients. One of these approaches is neuromeningeal manipulation. While a classical biomechanical approach aims to strengthen muscles for optimal use, neuromeningeal manipulation investigates nervous innervation and the way nerves travel through the body.



A nerve works best when it can move easily in the tissue that it is surrounded by. When there is tension in the nerves, there is a tension in the system. The basis of a neuromeningeal approach is to release this tension and allow the nerves to move freely.



Health and Performance Centre

January Fitness Newsletter 2016

Neuromeningeal manipulation therapy

What does *neuromeningeal* mean?

The word comes from a combination of nerves and meninges. The meninges are thin layers of tissue that surround the central nervous system, which is composed of the brain and the spinal cord. So, almost all the nerves in the body interact with the central nervous system when they need to either receive signals from the brain or send information, like pain, back to the brain. When peripheral nerves are tight they can pull on the meninges and cause associated pain. Thus, it can be helpful to release tension in the meninges and these nerves.



A nerve as the therapeutic target is a delicate and precise treatment. When a physiotherapist palpates around a nerve and it feels tight, there is a good sign that the tension is contributing to the patient's symptoms. Nerves are very small and the differences between a tight nerve and normal functioning nerves are very subtle. Even so, releasing the tension around the nerve and enabling it to glide smoothly through the tissue can help significantly reduce pain for some patients.



Health and Performance Centre

January Fitness Newsletter 2016

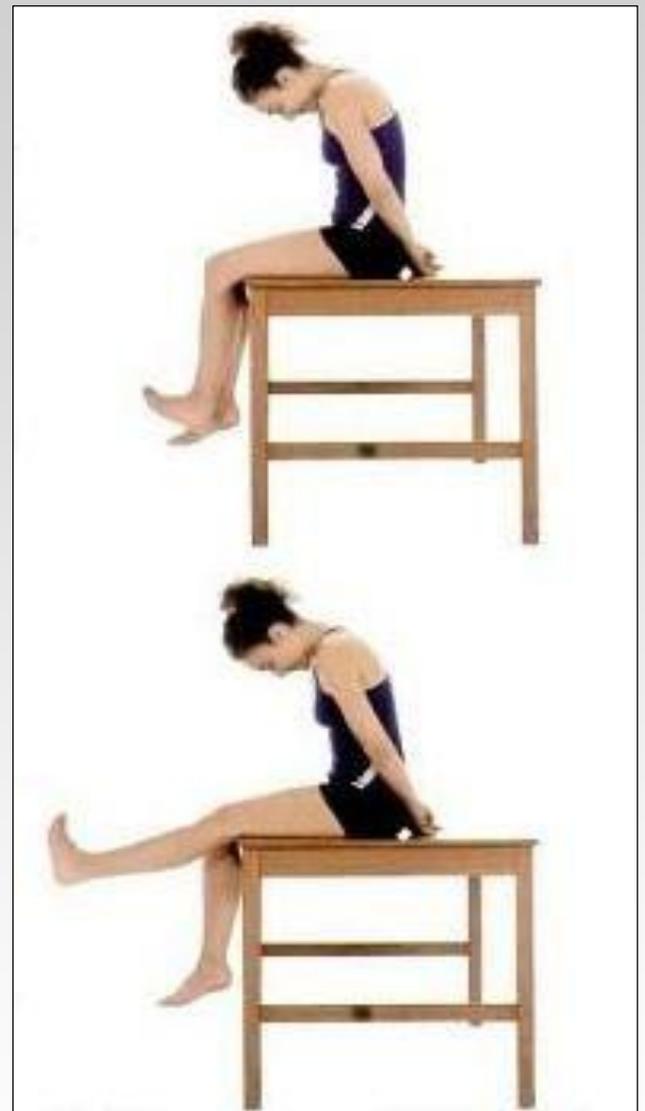
Neuromeningeal manipulation therapy

An important part of neuromeningeal therapy is lengthening nerves. While nerves are not actually getting longer, therapy attempts to promote nerves to glide more efficiently through the tissue.

Nerves can get entrapped within fibrous tissue and even harden in spots and form “nerve buds”. A physiotherapist can assess for these nerve buds, and with precise pressure, can loosen the fibrous tissue. This relieves pain by restoring the smooth nerve glide in its tissue.

Some conditions that this therapy have shown to be beneficial for:

- Lower back pain and sciatica
- Joint pain
- Digestive and swallowing disorders
- Whiplash injury
- Sprains and traumatic lesions



This image shows how extending the leg as well as tucking the chin in allows for the sciatic nerve to lengthen by gliding through a more extended position.



Health and Performance Centre

**Brought to you by Physiotherapy
Volunteers at the HPC - This Edition
by Mathew Aranha**



References and Further Reading

Developer of Neuromeningeal therapy is Dr. Jean- Pierre Barral
<http://www.barralinstitute.com/about/nm.php>

<http://kinetichealth.ca/resolving-pain-with-nerve-flossing-exercises/>

Did you find this newsletter interesting and helpful?

Do you have more questions on how to make healthy changes to your lifestyle?

Is pain holding you back? Talk to one of our physiotherapists, chiropractors or massage therapists!

For information on our programs, check out our website www.uoguelph.ca/hpc and click on the “Fitness and Nutrition” tab, or call a friendly receptionist at the HPC at **519-767-5011**

