



HULST JEPSEN PHYSICAL THERAPY

“How is physical therapy different from chiropractic or massage?”

At Hulst Jepsen Physical Therapy we incorporate techniques similar to what chiropractors and massage therapists use with some key alterations and additions.

MANUAL THERAPY

Hulst Jepsen physical therapists are trained in joint mobility assessment and joint mobilization techniques of the spine and extremities. We utilize spinal mobilization techniques similar to those chiropractors use with the exception of limiting use of high velocity thrust. We have found high velocity thrust can produce injury and believe it should be used sparingly. Our belief is most neck and back injuries do not need to be “cracked” to get better.

Hulst Jepsen physical therapists are also trained in a variety of soft tissue techniques similar to those a massage therapist might use. The difference here would be physical therapists have a significantly greater amount of education in the anatomy of soft tissues (muscles, tendons, ligaments) than massage therapists do.

Every patient who comes to Hulst Jepsen Physical Therapy gets some form of “hands on” treatments, be it joint mobilization, soft tissue techniques, isolated muscle stretching or muscle energy (using muscle stretch and contraction to mobilize joints). These manual therapy techniques are important in expediting healing but we believe this is only one piece of treating injuries.

MODALITIES

Another component of physical therapy is therapeutic modalities. Physical therapists utilize hot packs/cold packs, ultrasound (deep heat utilizing sound waves), electrical stimulation (electrical current to relax muscles and decrease pain and swelling), and iontophoresis (patches where medication is electrically pushed into a localized area).

TRACTION

Physical therapists utilize mechanical traction for neck and back problems. Mechanical traction is a machine that produces decompression and separation of neck or lower back vertebrae.

EDUCATION AND SPECIFIC EXERCISES

Most physical therapists believe that the most important thing they can do for their patient is to educate them on how to avoid reinjuring their affected body part. The second most important thing they can do for their patient is to prescribe specific exercises to address deficits in strength, muscle activation, and/or flexibility. Manual



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therapy techniques aim to reduce tightness of tissues, improve alignment, and minimize muscle imbalances. A custom exercise program developed by the physical therapist assists with maintaining these mobility and/or stability gains. Physical therapists are best equipped to not only help the patient get better but more importantly to help maintain health and wellness gains.