

RESEARCH REVIEW—MURPHY

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based on the clinical impression that it is beneficial."

"The frequent accompaniment of acute onset low back pain by spinal deformity suggests a mechanical factor, and the accompanying abnormality of straight-leg raise or femoral stretch test suggests that the lesion impinges on the spinal dura matter of the dural nerve sheaths."

"The lumbar spine was rotated away from the painful side to the limit of its range, the buttock or thigh of the painful side being used as a lever; a firm additional thrust was made in the same direction. This manoeuvre was repeated until abnormal symptoms and signs had disappeared, progress being assessed by repeated examination."

"Rotation manipulations apply torsion stress throughout the lumbar spine. If the posterior longitudinal ligament and the annulus fibrosus are intact, some of this torsion force would tend to exert a centripetal force, reducing prolapsed or bulging disc material."

"The results of this study suggest that small disc protrusions were present in patients presenting with lumbago and that the protrusions were diminished in size when their symptoms had been relieved by manipulations."

These authors concluded "it seems likely that the reduction effect [of the disc protrusion] is due to the manipulating thrust used."

Once again, this article by Mathews and Yates clearly describe and draw the manipulations used, including the words "forceful," "thrust," and "rotation." An interesting explanation for the successful treatment as well as the reduction in the size of the protrusion is uniquely linked to the rotational component of the manipulation: rotation tightens up intact aspects of the annular ring, pulling the nuclear protrusion towards the center and away from the nervous system.

Conclusions

The information presented here indicates that for most patients suffering from a lumbar disc prolapse, rotational manipulation of the lumbar spine is statistically quite safe and often quite effective. Because there are some risks and because effective manipulation requires training and experience, such manipulation should only be performed by a trained expert.

References

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DAN MURPHY, D.C., D.A.B.C.O. is the Vice President of the International Chiropractors Association. He graduated magna cum laude from Western States Chiropractic College in 1978 and received his Diplomate in Orthopedics in 1986. Internationally recognized for his excellent lectures on the "science" of chiropractic, Dr. Murphy has taught more than 2,000 seminars in the US and around the world.

Research Project of Northwestern Health Sciences University Aims to Improve the Practice of CAM

Northwestern Health Sciences University is in the midst of a ground-breaking research education project focused on integrating research into the practice of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). The project is being funded by a major grant from the National Institutes of Health's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NC-CAM). The grant, totaling more than \$750,000, will be awarded over a period of four to five years.

The project is a collaborative effort between Northwestern and the University of Minnesota. Roni Evans, D.C., M.S., dean of research at Northwestern's Wolfe-Harris Center for Clinical Studies and Mary Jo Kreitzer, Ph.D, R.N., Director of the Center for Spirituality and Healing at the University of Minnesota, are leading the project.

The broad objective of the CAM education project is to facilitate "Evidence

Informed Practice" (EIP) among CAM practitioners. Northwestern did not coin the phrase Evidence Informed Practice, but it is unique among other CAM education institutions. Other institutions teach an "Evidence Based Medicine" approach, which relies heavily on research evidence to inform clinical practice. In the EIP model, ALL forms of evidence matter, not just research.

"The EIP approach is very broad in scope and considers all forms of "evidence" as important in informing health care," emphasized Dr. Evans. This includes the clinician's own experience, the historical experience of a profession, clinical findings, patient's preferences and research. Importantly, research is viewed as a resource, and is only ONE piece of the clinical puzzle. "Our approach stresses the importance of the clinician practicing his or her "art" where all of these pieces are skillfully brought

together to provide the appropriate care to the patient," Dr. Evans said.

Who will benefit from this project? According to Northwestern, the changes generated by the project will impact Northwestern students, faculty and practitioners, but patients will receive the biggest benefit. "The patient is really at the center of Evidence Informed Practice. They are the ones who ultimately benefit from a clinician who effectively balances the different types of information that must be taken into account in clinical decision making," said Dr. Evans.



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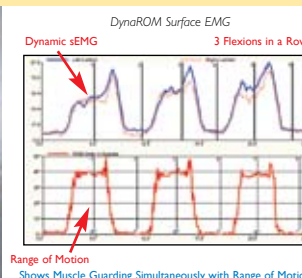
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