Active Release Techniques

The Active Relief Techniques (ART) is a system that is used in treating issues of muscles, ligaments, tendons and nerves. It is a soft tissue system, therefore, and is movement based. During an ART session, the specialist utilizes their hands to apply the technique to a patient’s body. The ultimate goal is to help re-establish healthy and proper bodily motion between the muscles and fascia, while also reducing any sort of connective tissue tension. What is re-established through this technique? Muscle and fascia and neural glide within the treated area are rejuvenated. This encourages proper movement and functioning of various muscle groups and their connecting tendons and ligaments.

After Injury

The Active Release Technique is typically used on patients suffering from acute and chronic strain injuries, as well as patients who have recently undergone surgeries. Those who have had surgery may suffer from limited muscle motion due to the scar tissue that forms during the healing process. This scar tissue can connect to injured tissue and thus limit mobility and cause tension between ligaments and tendons. The scar tissue further causes complications in that in binding to the muscles, they cause the muscles to shorten and weaken, the motion and general movement of muscles and joints are altered negatively, and nerves can be compressed, causing pain. ART, then, can be used to ease that tension, improper mobility, and poor circulation.

Conditions for Treatment

Further, those suffering from headaches, carpal tunnel syndrome, sciatica, joint issues, including the shoulder and knee, as well as tennis elbow, may all benefit from treatment sessions of the Active Release Technique. However, in cases of blunt trauma and inflammation, ART may not be the best technique to apply in treating those sorts of injuries.

Treatment

Each session of ART combines both an examination and a treatment into one session. The soft tissues that have sustained injuries are targeted during the treatment itself. ART is different from massages in that the Technique utilizes more than 500 protocols for various parts of the body. Therefore, Active Release Technique is not a one-size-fits-all approach to healing; various body parts are worked in various ways and require not only the specialist’s participation, but also the patient’s. An examiner (Chiropractor) utilizes their hands to determine the texture and tightness, as well as the
mobility of the soft tissues being targeted. Hand pressure is used to work and break up the fibrous adhesions of the scar tissue. Combined with hand pressure the Doctor will also aid in performing stretching motions that work to improve circulatory and lymphatic flow. The basic premise underlying an ART treatment is to shorten the tissue, apply pressure, and lengthen the tissue, making it slide relative to adjacent tissue.

**How it Works**

There are four major levels of an Active Release Technique treatment. The first three are based on the practitioner providing the movement to the patient. The fourth level requires the patient themselves to actively move their injured body area while the specialist applies tension. This involvement of a patient is seen as a healthy option, considering those who are active participants in their own healing tend to see better and more permanent outcomes. Call our office, we would love to help!

References:


“We will listen to you, spend time with you, and help you recover.”

– Dr. Hamilton