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I) Acupuncture and Low Back Pain

Response of lower back pain to acupuncture therapy in this study still leaves one wondering. Patients with chronic lower back pain were randomized to receive either real acupuncture based upon traditional Chinese acupuncture points, sham acupuncture in which non-acupoints were needled and conventional therapy consisting of medication and physical therapy. Each received between 10 and 15 visits. Results were determined at 6 months using a standardized questionnaire for pain and function. Both acupuncture groups, real and sham, scored significantly better than the conventional treatment group, showing improvement twice that of

conventional treatment. There was effort to control for positive expectation from acupuncture but perhaps this did play a part in the response. As expected, further research is needed.

Haake, M. et al. *German acupuncture trials for chronic lower back pain: randomized, multicenter, blinded, parallel-group trial with 3 groups.* **Arch Intern Med.** 2007; 167(17). 1892-98.

II) Yellow Flags and Low Back Pain

Waddell signs suggestive of psychosocial overlay. Well respected British orthopedic surgeon Gordon Waddell has published numerous papers regarding lower back pain and extensively looked at the psychosocial aspect of back pain. He has published Waddell signs of non-organic back pain. These include:

1. Tenderness – even to superficial light touch or complain of deep, non-anatomic tenderness in multiple areas
2. Simulation – axial loading of the spine causes lower back pain; also, rotation shoulders and pelvis together elicits lower back

3. Distraction – when the seated straight leg raise is different from the supine straight leg raise
 4. Regional – a giving way weakness, especially in multiple muscle groups
 5. Overreaction – disproportionate facial grimacing or verbal expression
- Waddell has suggested that patients with 3 or more categories be evaluated for psychosocial overlay. His tests have mistakenly been used to determine

malingering, which is intentionally lying and deceiving regarding a condition. True malingering seems quite rare. What is more common is psychosocial overlay co-existing with some mechanical spine complaint.

Waddell G et al. *Nonorganic physical signs in low back pain.* **Spine** 1980; 5(2): 117-25.



B. Office News

Drs. Coulis and Furtado will be joined by Peter Whang, MD of Yale Orthopedics on November 6, 2008 at the Yale Shoreline Medical Center. They will be speaking on current trends of surgical and non-surgical treatment of Lumbar Spine Disorders.

Dr. Coulis will also be speaking to medical physicians, chiropractors and physical therapists on evaluation and management of pelvic and hip disorders. This lecture will be at the University of Bridgeport on November 15, 2008.



“Specializing in the evaluation, treatment, and rehabilitation of musculoskeletal conditions.”

C. Question of the month

What kind of record keeping do chiropractors do?

Documentation of an initial history will often include key aspects of the chief complaint, such as location, radiation, type of pain, intensity of pain, provocative and palliative factors, temporal factors, history trauma, and also include past medical history, medication usage, and work history. The examination documentation will include observation, palpation, range of motion, orthopedic testing and neurological testing, all

relevant to the area of chief complaint. Daily progress notes are typically done in a SOAP format. Many chiropractors will send the patient's primary care physician a short narrative regarding their findings on initial evaluation and treatment plan. Some chiropractic offices are moving toward electronic health records. The challenge for the future here will be interoperability.

D. Contact Us

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Please be aware that Drs. Coulis and Furtado are available to give a 20 minute lunchtime presentation on how a medical

physician can best collaborate with a chiropractor. They are also available to give 45 minute grand round type lectures on Introduction to Chiropractic and Non-Surgical Management of Lower Back Pain. Please contact our office to schedule either Dr. Coulis or Dr Furtado to come to your office.

If you would like some additional literature about our office and the services we

provide, please contact our office and request our Introduction to the Shoreline Spine & Pain Associates package.