

Orthogo Physical and Aquatic Therapy Newsletter

EXPENDITURES FOR NECK AND BACK PAIN DON'T ADD UP

In a report authored by medical doctors and public health experts published in the February 2008 issue of JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association), looked at the following questions:

Coming Soon

*Let Your Physician
Know that You are
Looking for
Alternatives*

- 1 How much does it cost to treat society's neck and back problems and is it increasing?
- 2 What percentage of healthcare resources is spent on neck and back problems?
- 3 Which components of neck/back care contribute most to any changes noted?
- 4 In our overall population, is the health status of adults with neck or back pain improving?

Over this nine year period in question, increased MRI's, injections, and medication prescriptions were recommended for low back pain treatment. One would expect, as a consequence of increased spending and improved technology, that people experiencing low back pain would get better faster, have less time off work, and less disability. The results of this study suggested otherwise.

The authors made the following comments:

- 1 Despite only a modest increase in the American population between 1997 and 2005, expenditures for neck and back problems increased 65%.
- 2 Despite rapidly increasing medical expenditures from 1997 to 2005, there was no improvement over this period in self-assessed health status, functional disability, work limitations, or social functioning among respondents with spine problems.
- 3 The greatest relative increase in expenditures for treatment was observed for medications.
- 4 Based on their calculations, \$85 billion dollars was spent on neck and back problems. Only heart disease and stroke cost more.

They concluded and we quote them here:

"These data suggest that spine problems are expensive, due both to large numbers of affected persons and to high costs per person. We did not observe improvements in health outcomes commensurate with the increasing costs over time. Spine problems may offer opportunities to reduce expenditures without associated worsening of clinical outcomes."

WE RECOMMEND TREATMENT PROVIDED BY A PHYSICAL THERAPIST

Physical therapist treatment of neck and low back pain is an excellent conservative, cost-effective alternative to medication or surgery. Treatment that is rendered based on the current best evidence can improve spine patients' health status. Moreover, early intervention for neck and back, pain with effective treatment, can help prevent the progression the patient's pain to chronic status.

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Reference:

JAMA.2008;299(6):656-664

Our Services

- One-on-One Care
- Orthopaedic Therapy
- Back/ Neck Injuries
- Total Joint Rehab
- Arthritic Conditions
- Shoulder Conditions
- Hand Rehab
- Aquatic Therapy Pool
- Sports Rehab
- Sport Specific Ex
- Golf Program
- Industrial Rehab
- Work Conditioning
- FCEs
- Job Analysis
- Pre work Screening

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