

Lumbar Multifidus: An essential muscle to address during rehab!

- Acute LBP resolves in only 4 weeks for 90% of patients whether they get Physiotherapy, walk, take Medications, get acupuncture or pray!!
- BUT, following that first episode of LBP, the pain recurs in up to 80% of the patients within one year...what went wrong?
- There are studies that show a strong relationship between LM dysfunction and recurrence of LBP after disc surgery
- Rapidly (early as 24 hours) following an episode of LBP, LM undergo dramatic atrophy LOCALIZED to the level AND side of the pain
- A study has clearly demonstrated that LM muscle recovery does not simply happen spontaneously once the pain is gone... Walking, swimming, a general gym program, return to work or sport did not increase the size of the atrophied LM in the 10 week period that the study took place
- However the LM muscle DID INCREASE in size again and pain recurrence DECREASED following a localized, specific, and isolated Multifidus retraining program

Clinical Relevance: Lack of localized muscle support from the lumbar multifidi may be one reason why back pain occurs again and again... following that initial episode. At **SPORT AND SPINE PHYSIOTHERAPY**, patients are educated on lumbar multifidi retraining on their first visit with exercise instruction for their home exercise program. Manual therapy, joint mobs, movement reeducation, motor control and strengthening are also included in treatment sessions to ensure a full recovery and help avoid reoccurring symptoms!

Reference: Hides J, Richardson C, Jull G, "Multifidus Muscle Recovery Is Not Automatic After Resolution of Acute, First-Episode Low Back Pain" (1996), Spine (21) 2763-2769



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