

CONNECTICUT VALLEY HOSPITAL PHYSICAL THERAPY SERVICES

Physical Therapy Treatments for Pain

Patients receiving Physical Therapy Services at Connecticut Valley Hospital will receive various non-pharmacological treatments to relieve pain caused by their particular physical injury. As Physical Therapists we will evaluate problems with strength, flexibility, balance or other factors which cause pain and adversely affect people's ability to perform every day tasks. The following is a list of physical therapy modalities and techniques used at this facility for pain relief. From these treatments the respective therapist will tailor a specific treatment plan to best suit the patient.

1. Hot Packs
2. Cold packs
3. Paraffin Bath
4. Whirlpool
5. Ultrasound
6. Electrical Stimulation
7. Mechanical Traction
8. Massage
9. Joint Mobilization
10. Myofascial Release
11. Craniosacral Therapy
12. Deep Breathing and Relaxation
13. Proper Lifting Technique and Body Mechanics
14. Personalized Therapeutic Exercise Programs

Some of these terms may be unfamiliar to you, so here is a list of definitions to help clarify. The Physical Therapy staff will also be more than happy to answer any questions you may have. We can be reached at extension 6013.

Hot Packs: The packs provide moist heat for the relief of pain and muscle spasms, improvement of range of motion, and improvement of localized circulation to the treatment area. Moist heat is indicated in cases of muscle strain, sprain, tendonitis, bursitis, lumbo-sacral pain, and for joint relaxation prior to or following joint mobilizations.

Cold Packs: Cold packs decrease body temperature causing blood vessels to close and reduction of blood flow. Cold packs are used primarily in acute injuries such as sprains and strains to reduce swelling and decrease pain.

Paraffin Bath: A Paraffin Bath is a tank containing paraffin wax. The paraffin is melted and used to deliver heat, especially to areas, which are difficult to heat by anything but a liquid medium(i.e. hands, fingers, toes). Paraffin baths have been used with good results for such conditions as stiff joints, arthritic joints, old sprains, local swelling, painful feet, tenosynovitis, bursitis, fibrositis, strains and contusions.

Whirlpool: A whirlpool provides moist heat to the treatment area in order to clean wounds, increase circulation, mobilize edema and provide pain relief.

Ultrasound: Ultrasound is a form of deep heat that utilizes sound waves to penetrate and raise temperature of underlying tissues. Ultrasound is used to increase metabolic rate of tissues, increase local blood flow, and decrease muscle tension and joint stiffness. Ultrasound is used in cases of soft tissue shortening and scarring, subacute and chronic inflammation, and painful conditions involving muscle guarding, neuroma, and trigger areas.

Electrical Stimulation: Electrical Stimulation involves the use of current electricity to stimulate motor nerves and muscle tissue to evoke muscle contraction, stimulate acupoints or fatigue pain receptors for pain relief.

Mechanical Traction: Treatment table with unit that applies varying amounts of pull or traction in order to separate vertebrae. Traction is a treatment for neck or back pain involving nuclear protrusion or disc lesions.

Massage: Stroking or kneading muscle tissue to decreases muscle tension, increase circulation, stimulate lymphatic drainage and, therefore, reduce pain.

Joint Mobilization: Passive oscillations of joint surfaces to increase accessory motions and improve total range of motion and reduce pain and stiffness.

Myofascial Release: Techniques used to release built-in fascial restrictions and re-establish balance within the fascial system.

Craniosacral Therapy: Techniques used to influence the proper movement and alignment of the core fascial components which include the cranial bones, the dura mater and the sacrum or tailbone.

Deep Breathing and Relaxation: Stress and anxiety can make chronic pain worse therefore these relaxation techniques can ease discomfort.

Lifting Technique and Body Mechanics: Instruction in proper biomechanical movement can prevent injuries and stop existing injuries from becoming worse. Prevention is the best medicine.

Exercise Programs: Specific exercise programs will be created by the therapist to increase strength and flexibility in specific muscle groups. This program can be printed from computer and a copy given to the patient allowing the patient to perform the exercises independently.