

Orthogo Physical and Aquatic Therapy Newsletter

INNOVATION AT VIRGINIA MASON - THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST FIRST MODEL WORKS FOR BACK PAIN

Coming Soon

We Need to Change and Physical Therapy can Help

It isn't easy for the employer or the patient these days. Premiums for employers have increased by double-digit figures and patient co-pays/coinsurance responsibilities have significantly increased as well.

One of the most significant cost centers for insurance companies is payment for low back pain treatment. According to a January 23rd, 2008 AHRQ News, back problems accounted for \$32 billion in expenditures in 2005. Aetna Health Insurance confronted Virginia Mason Hospital, in Seattle Washington with a similar situation. Patients that were seen at their spine clinic received unnecessary MRI's and appointments with specialists which drove up the costs of back care. Consequently, Virginia Mason Hospital took a novel approach to the problem. Back pain patients were referred to a physical therapist before they ever saw a physician. As a consequence, the number of MRI's provided decreased by one-third, patients were seen right away, instead of waiting a week to see a doctor, and only 6% of patients missed work.

WHY YOU SHOULD SEE A PHYSICAL THERAPIST FIRST

When it comes to low back pain, the evidence is clear. Seeing a physical therapist first is the best choice. For a vast majority of non-specific low back pain complaints, physical therapists have the clinical skills to provide effective clinical care.

Part of your care involves a detailed medical history review during which we will be able to identify any unusual problems that may necessitate a referral to a physician. For example, if your back pain was the result of a major trauma, you have constant pain at rest, a history of cancer, osteoporosis, fever, bowel or bladder problems associated with the low back pain, substance abuse, a long history of steroid use, you should see your doctor. Your physical therapist will help you identify the need for physician referral.

IT MIGHT BE EASIER TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH US

Sometimes it can take several days, even weeks, to get an appointment with a specialist. They are a rare and valuable resource and are very busy. It is rarely the case that you have to wait more than a few days to get an appointment at our practice. Often times we can see you the very next day.

If you are interested in saving money, avoiding long waits to see a doctor, and want effective care for your low back pain, take note of what Virginia Mason Hospital did and see your physical therapist first.

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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