

Joint Pain Relief with Laser Therapy

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Joint pain slowing you down? There may be more options for treatment available than you know. There is a relatively new physical therapy modality called laser therapy that can create rapid healing of joint problems. It is a painless, effective therapy for the treatment of a wide array of muscle, joint, back and skin issues. In my practice, it has been an invaluable tool for helping my patients. Most of my patients who have utilized laser therapy for their joint problems have had relief from pain, increased range of motion, and are able to return to exercise and work. Also, in my experience, laser therapy is the only therapy that shows consistent benefit for arthritis sufferers.

This technology uses superluminous and laser diodes to bathe abnormal tissue with photons. Photons are particles of energy that are absorbed by the cell. Once inside the cells, light energy can be converted into biochemical energy to accelerate cell function. The therapeutic light beam permits penetration of deep tissues without adversely affecting normal cells and the body's natural tissue healing processes are enhanced. The therapy doesn't just mask symptoms. It is curative and as logic dictates, symptoms resolve.

The Meditech laser device that I selected for my naturopathic medical clinic is a top of the line, Health Canada approved unit that is used in hospital physiotherapy clinics and burn units around the world. The Toronto Raptors have their own Meditech laser for treating their injured basketball players. Let's look at a number of common joint problems and how they can be addressed with laser therapy:

Jaw pain: In a published placebo controlled study, laser therapy was shown to significantly reduce pain, increase range of motion and decrease tender points in patients with MRI confirmed temporomandibular joint pathology.

Shoulders: Shoulder pain can be caused by tendonitis (biceps tendonitis for example), rotator cuff injuries (often a torn supraspinatus muscle), bursitis, or deep joint problems. Often several of these mechanisms can co-exist. Laser therapy can effectively address each of these mechanisms and result in improved range of motion and decreased pain. Many of my patients have also reported that they sleep better since their shoulders don't hurt at night.

Golfer's and Tennis Elbow: These conditions are medically called epicondylitis, inflammation of the tendon that attaches to the medial and lateral bumps of the elbow. A placebo controlled study in Switzerland found that total relief of the pain and improved function was achieved in 82% of the acute cases.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (hand and wrist pain / numbness): The treatment of this condition with laser therapy has been extensively studied. In a review of 5 significant studies, it was found that the average success rate was 84%. The patients had pain for an

average of two years prior to entering the studies. I have had several patients able to cancel surgery for carpal tunnel syndrome after about 9 treatments with laser therapy.

Bursitis of the hip: This condition causes pain when sleeping on the affected side and also with activity. It is the condition that I have found responds most consistently to laser therapy. All the patients we have treated for this condition have improved, and I too have used it successfully for the same issue.

Knee Pain: Osteoarthritis of the knee is a very common cause of significant disability for many seniors. Who wants to wait until the condition is so bad that surgery is the only option? In fact, studies have shown that with laser therapy, surgery can be avoided in many cases. A double blind placebo controlled study showed that laser therapy reduced swelling, increased motion, and decreased pain right after a series of sessions, and the benefits were sustained. I have certainly seen the long term effects myself and in my patients. Arthritis patients return for more treatments, but usually it is for a different joint!

Plantar fasciitis: This painful condition affects the bottom of the foot. I usually recommend stretches, exercises and massage for patients with this condition, along with laser therapy. Patients also reported significantly less pain after a series of laser treatments. A placebo controlled study found that the thickness of the plantar fascia was reduced. Another study showed that 90% of patients experienced relief: 64% of patients had no pain and another 26% were significantly improved.

So why suffer? Laser therapy is a safe and effective tool that can help you get back to the life you desire. For more information about Dr. Macdonald's state of the art laser therapy machine, click on laser therapy on her website www.getwellhere.com. To book a free 15 minute consultation to see if laser therapy is the right treatment for you, call her medical office at 250 897-0235.

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