



TEXAS PHYSICAL THERAPY
SPECIALISTS

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Patients with Low Back Pain Not Getting Best Care

Study Reveals Less Than Optimal Primary Care Management of Low Back Pain

SAN ANTONIO, TX (February 15, 2010) – A recent study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine reported a gap between established evidence-based guidelines and the practice patterns of primary care physicians when it comes to the management of patients with low back pain. The study found that despite recommendations to refrain from obtaining diagnostic imaging and prescribing narcotics, the prescription of expensive diagnostic test and ineffective treatments as first line interventions has increased since the guidelines were published. The evidence-based guidelines result in better outcomes and reduced cost in the care of patients with low back pain. The lack of adherence to guidelines is a significant concern, perhaps contributing to the over \$50 Billion the United States spends on the management of low back pain each year.

The clinical practice guidelines, developed and published in late 2008 by the American College of Physicians and the American Pain Society, reviewed over 1200 items of high quality peer-reviewed research. Dr. Robert Wainner, PT, PhD, Vice-President of Clinical Excellence of Texas Physical Therapy Specialists (TexPTS), said that, “Clinical practice guidelines are time efficient and cost-effective pathways to management of patients with low back pain. However, the study reported that one of the most important first line interventions supported in the guidelines, patient education and advice to stay active, was only given to 20% of patients.” Close to 50% of patients with low back were sent for imaging studies and prescribed opiod analgesics. Less than 18% of patients were referred to allied health specialists like physical therapists.

Spinal manipulation is supported as an effective intervention for acute, sub-acute, and chronic low back pain in the clinical practice guidelines. “Physical therapists utilizing spinal manipulation have been demonstrated to reduce pain and disability for individuals with low back pain,” says Dr. Wainner. He also commented that patient knowledge of the guidelines is important. “Patient awareness of the guidelines and effective interventions like patient education and spinal manipulation can help improve physician adherence to guidelines.” What remains clear from the results is that usual care provided by general practitioners is not consistent with the best care for patients with low back pain.

“You have drugs, you have surgery, or you have us,” explained Dr. Robert Wainner. Physical therapists are uniquely trained to manage individuals with chronic musculoskeletal conditions like low back and neck pain and use a combination of low risk, state-of-the-art procedures such as manipulation and therapeutic exercise. “The reality is that very few treatments have been shown to be as effective. Physical therapists are clearly the best first choice for individuals suffering from musculoskeletal conditions,” Dr. Wainner concluded.

For more information about how a physical therapist can help alleviate pain, minimize the use of prescription drugs and expensive diagnostic imaging, and prevent painful and costly surgery, visit www.TexPTS.com or give us a call at (888) 658-8483. Remember...we make doing business with us easy and treat everybody as family! You can also contact the American Academy of Orthopaedic Manual Physical Therapists (www.AAOMPT.org). AAOMPT represents physical therapists by promoting excellence in orthopaedic manual physical therapy

practice, education and research.

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Texas Physical Therapy Specialists

Texas Physical Therapy Specialists (TexPTS) is a privately owned, multi-site physical therapy practice. Founded in 2004, TexPTS is home of the largest number of board certified physical therapists and manual therapy fellows in San Antonio and Austin. TexPTS specializes in hands-on care and therapeutic exercise for patients with non-surgical and post-operative conditions such as low back and neck pain, upper and lower extremity conditions, and oral-maxillofacial pain/TMD and provide numerous specialty services including aquatics, EMG/NCV testing, sports medicine, and wellness/fitness assessments. TexPTS serves the South Central Texas region with 12 locations in San Antonio (Selma, Blossom, Splashtown, and Bulverde), New Braunfels, San Marcos, and Austin (Westgate, Bee Caves, Balcones Woods, Pflugerville, and Central Park). TexPTS's vision is to be the **Best First Choice™** for physical therapy services in Texas using the **Newest Research** to achieve the **Best Results** in **Fewer Visits**. TexPTS received the 2009 Practice Award as the top private physical therapy practice in the country from the Private Practice Section of the American Physical Therapy Association and was named to the Inc. 500 list of fastest growing companies in America. For more information about how a physical therapist can help alleviate pain, minimize the use of prescription drugs and expensive diagnostic imaging, and prevent painful and costly surgery, visit www.TexPTS.com or call (888) 658-8483. We make doing business with us easy and treat everybody as family!