

The Connections Between Structural Balance and Health Care

Implications for the Naturopathic Doctor

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One of the great challenges facing every naturopathic doctor, and all health practitioners, is discovering and treating the cause of the condition.

There are countless medical tests which reveal the fact that certain organs or systems have become imbalanced or are malfunctioning. Blood tests, ECG's, MRI's, live-cell analysis, electrodermal screening – the list goes on and on. However, in many cases, the underlying cause of the condition is still elusive.

One of the factors, which has rarely been considered, but which is a fact of life for everyone on this planet, is the inevitable advent of injuries. Injuries may include strains, falls, collisions, lacerations, burns, etc. The effects of certain types of injuries have recently become associated with dire medical consequences, namely the effects of concussion. However, concussion (definition: *shock caused by the impact of a collision, blow, etc.*) – most commonly associated with head trauma – actually affects other parts of the body.

The thorax and abdomen, and the visceral structures contained in them, are primarily composed of fluid (mainly water). Water is extremely dense, and is referred to as a “non-compressible” substance. Therefore, with impact, the water molecules in these parts of the body can only move in one direction – outward, much like what happens when a water balloon hits the pavement... Kaboom! Therefore, the mechanical energy of an impact injury (blow, fall, sports injury, motor vehicle collision, etc.) is often transferred to the internal organs. This can result in what is often referred to as ***internal injuries***.

Recent discoveries regarding cell structure and the biological effects of physical and mechanical forces, has revealed that many of these injuries can lead to **alterations in physiological function**. These discoveries have led to the new science of mechanobiology^{1, 2}.

Mechanobiology is an emerging field of science at the interface of biology and engineering. It focuses on the way that physical forces and changes in cell or tissue mechanics contribute to development, physiology, and disease. A major challenge in the

field is understanding mechanotransduction--the molecular mechanism by which cells sense and respond to mechanical signals. While medicine has typically looked for the genetic basis of disease, advances in mechanobiology suggest that changes in cell mechanics, extracellular matrix structure, or mechanotransduction may contribute to the development of many diseases, including atherosclerosis, asthma, osteoporosis, heart failure, and cancer. There is also a strong mechanical basis for many generalized medical disabilities, such as lower back pain and irritable bowel syndrome. The effectiveness of many of the mechanical therapies already in clinical use shows how important physical forces can be in physiological control.¹

Matrix Repatterning Therapy (MRT) is a gentle manual therapeutic approach, which addresses the structural and mechanical component of many common injuries associated with falls, motor vehicle collisions and sports injuries³. Practitioners around the world have been trained in these techniques, and are achieving an unprecedented level of clinical success with a wide range of conditions⁴.

Naturopathic doctors are trained to support the optimal function and inherent healing properties of the body. One of the goals of therapeutic intervention is to support the physiological function of various organs and systems, namely the digestive system, the cardiovascular system, the reproductive system, the endocrine system and the nervous system. Injuries to certain key components of these systems can lead to serious alterations in physiological processes. Matrix Repatterning can help the clinician to readily identify the specific sites of injury, and gently and effectively restore optimal function. Recent clinical evidence, confirmed by laboratory testing, has indicated that MRT results in normalization of several key indices of systemic function, including: liver enzymes, cholesterol, blood sugar values and cardiovascular markers. In addition, MRT has demonstrated clinical effectiveness in the treatment of many other challenging conditions, such as migraine, snoring & sleep apnea, esophageal reflux, erectile dysfunction, and urinary incontinence.

The Matrix Institute provides training in Matrix Repatterning to licensed practitioners (ND, DC, PT, RMT, MD, DO, DDS, DVM, AT) in a series of seminar programs leading to the designation of Certified Matrix Repatterning Practitioner.

References:

1. Ingber, DE. Mechanobiology and diseases of mechanotransduction. *Annals of Medicine* 2003; 35: 1-14

2. Ingber DE. Tensegrity: the architectural basis of cellular mechanotransduction. Annu. Rev. Physiol. 1997; 59:575-599.
3. Roth, GB. The Matrix Repatterning Program for Pain Relief, New Harbinger Press, Oakland CA 2005.
4. Roth, GB. Harvard Researcher Investigates New Structural Approach to Health Care. Canadian Chiropractor, Annex Publishing, April 2008.

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