

Pain: The Puzzle

pain

treatment

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What is Pain?

- usually localized physical suffering associated with bodily disorder (such as a disease or an injury)



- A signal that something is wrong.
- "...whatever the experiencing person says it is, existing wherever/whenever the experiencing person says it does" (McCaffery, 1968)
- So – find out what is wrong and fix it – pain goes away!
 - Or does it?





Acute vs. Chronic

- ▶ Acute is new pain usually with a definitive onset associated with movement (sprained ankle, bruised knee, whiplash)
- ▶ “Ambush” Pain – sudden onset from a seemingly harmless movement
- ▶ Gradual Onset – comes on slowly without apparent cause, or due to overuse
- ▶ Chronic – Pain which persists despite attempts to treat it. Often of unknown origin, or persisting after an injury has “healed”
 - ▶ Different time frames – weeks to months





Today's topic

- ▶ Pain that persists or keeps returning
- ▶ Pain that is relieved by treatment, but returns after a short time.



Why should pain persist, or keep coming back after it is gone?



We think of our body as “held up” by our skeleton.

- Ligaments hold the bones together
- Muscles hang off the skeleton

What “holds up” our skeleton?



In reality: Body as a tent

- Balanced tension
 - Poles hold up the tent
 - Tent holds up the poles



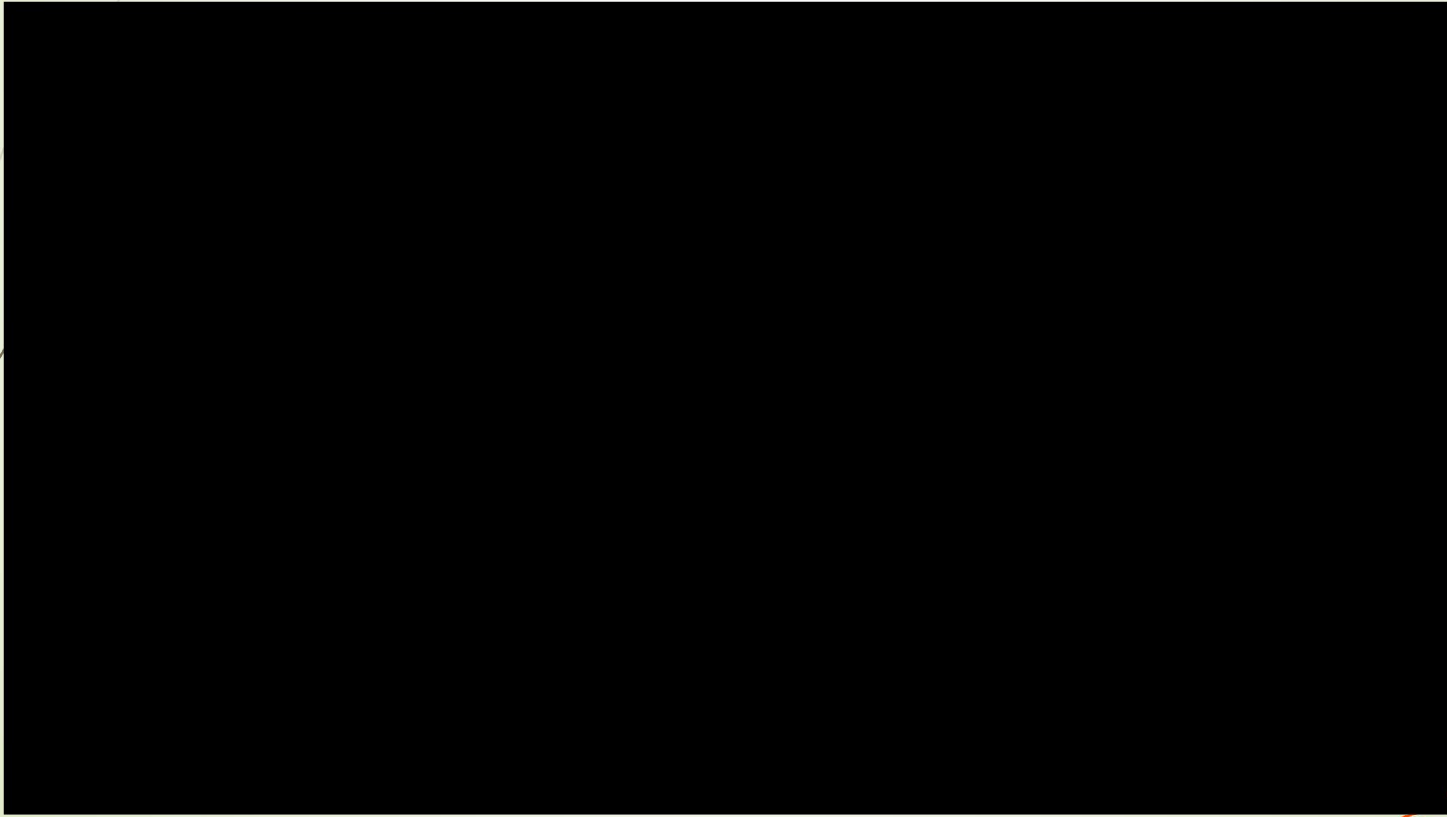
- What happens if one connection is broken?





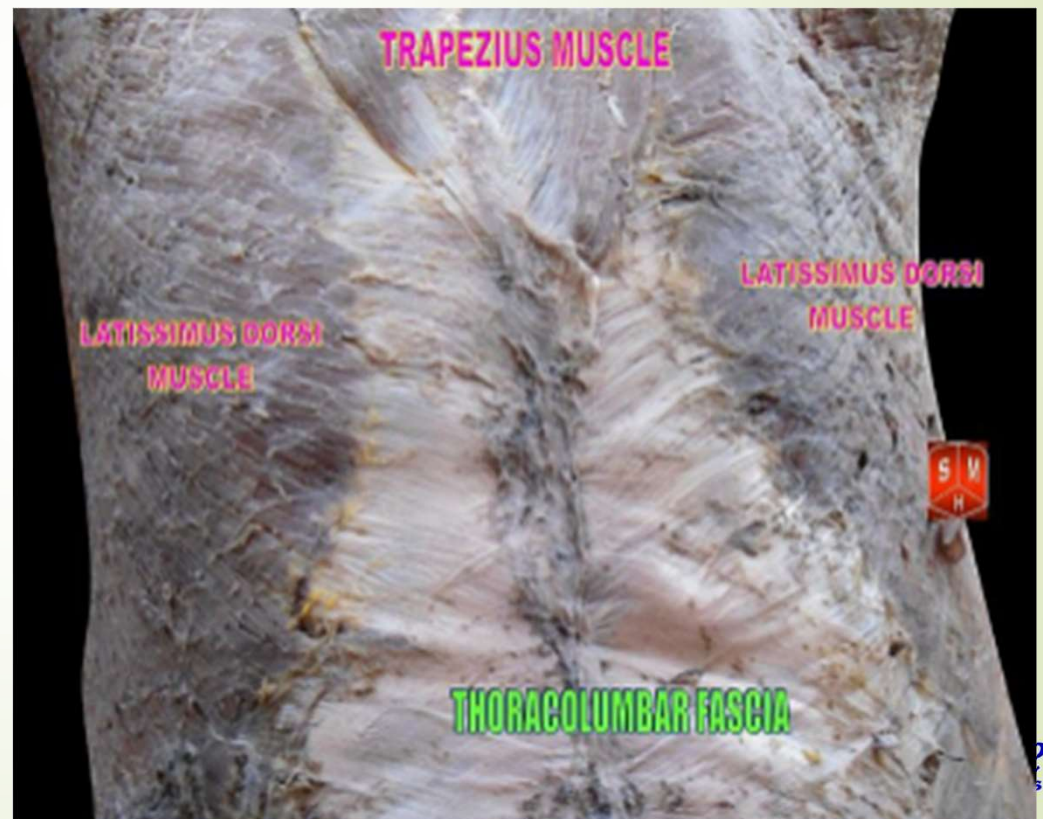
Tensegrity

- ▶ Integrity of the balance of tension.



Why should pain persist?

- Imbalance in forces on a body part
 - Muscle tension
 - Fascial tension
- What is fascia?

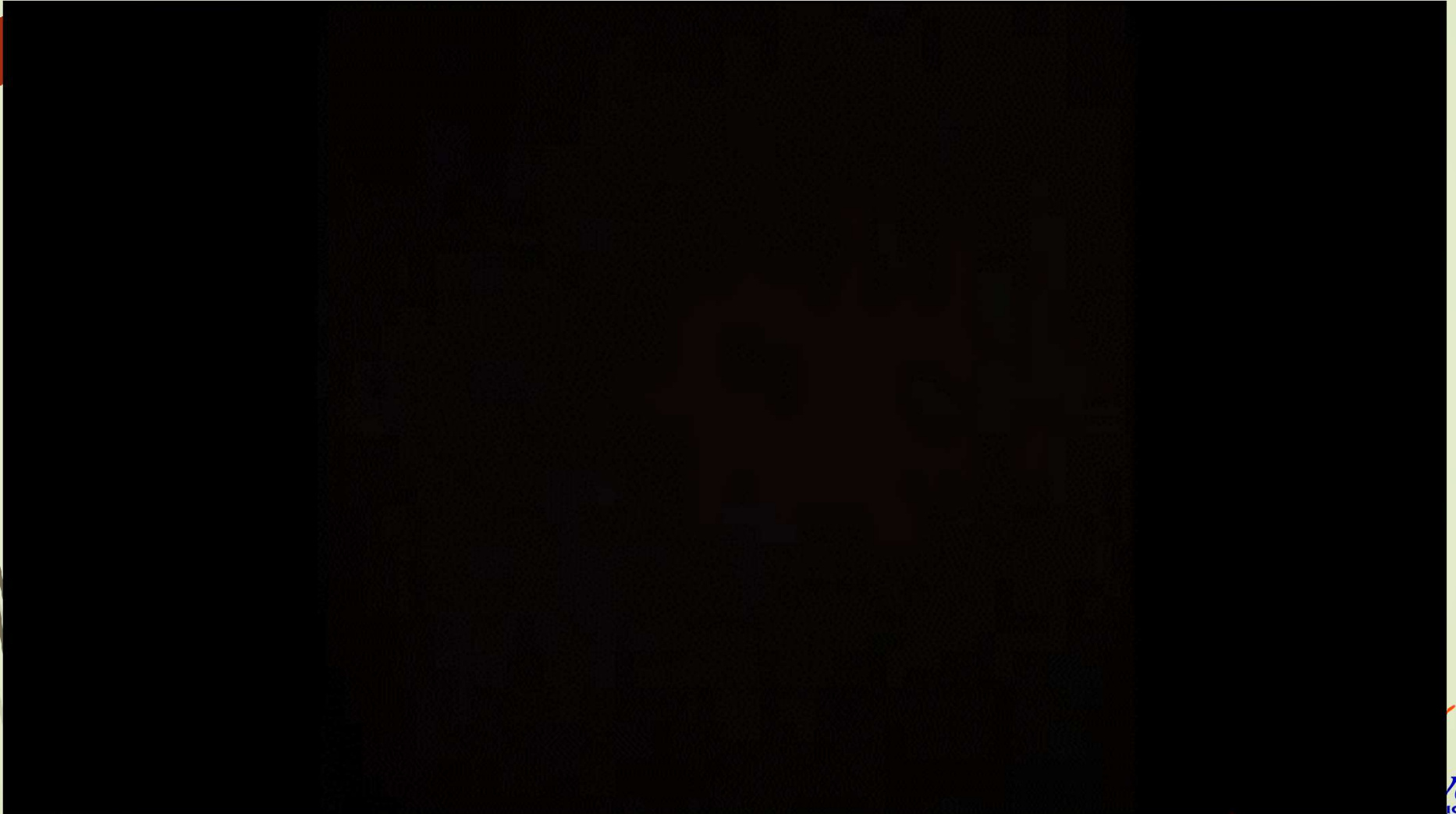


What is fascia?



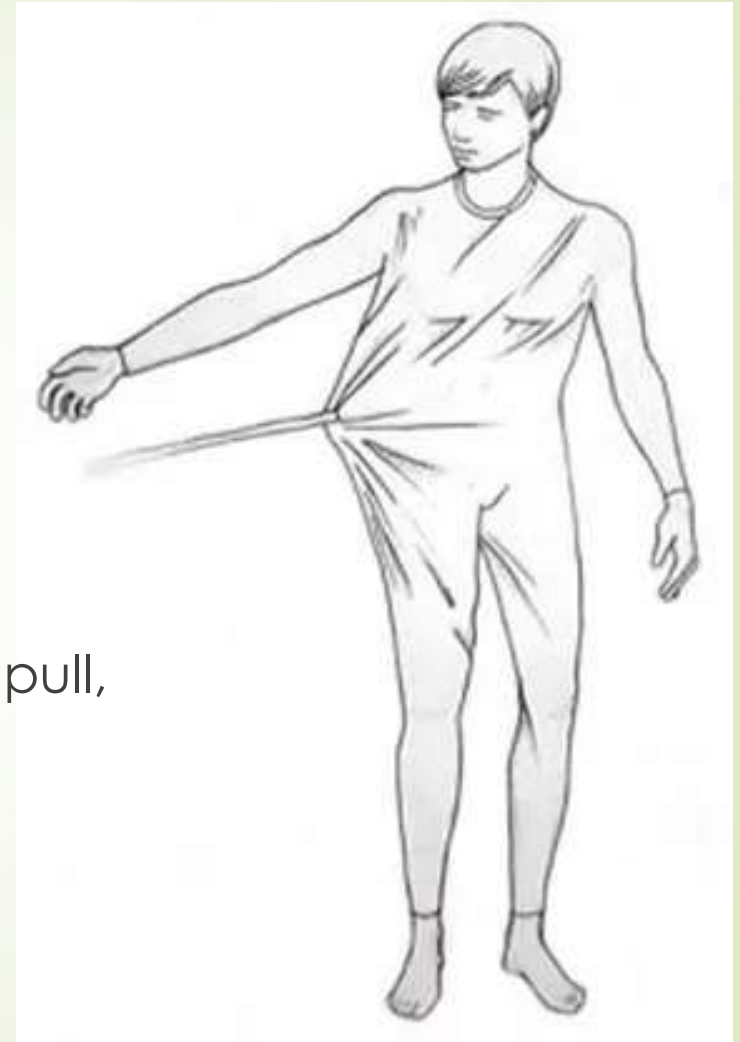
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What is fascia?

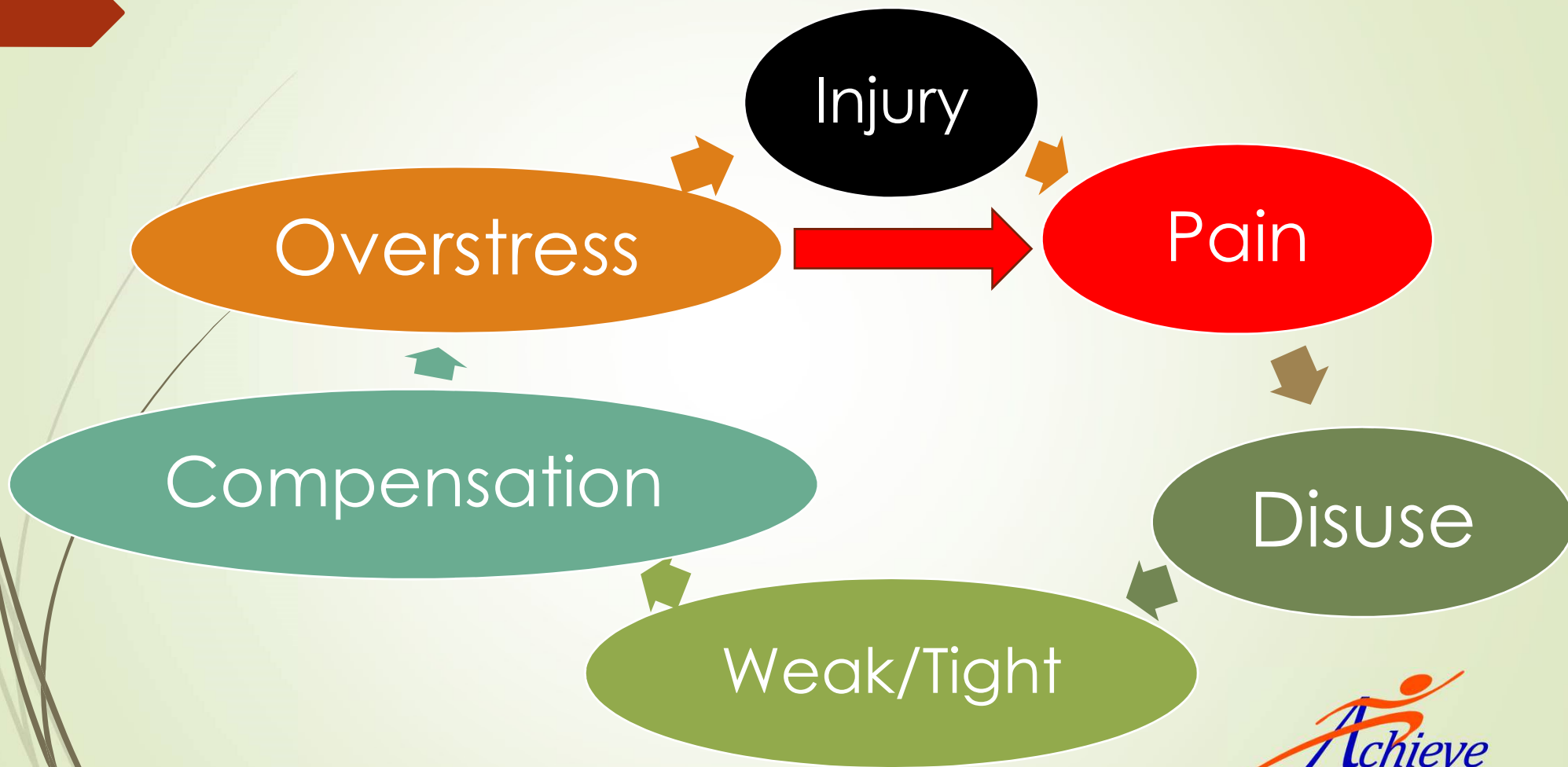


In the body.....

- ▶ Fascial imbalance caused by
 - ▶ Injury
 - ▶ Postural issues
 - ▶ Repetitive stress (work?)
- ▶ Becomes habitual and continues to pull, even if muscles are relaxed.

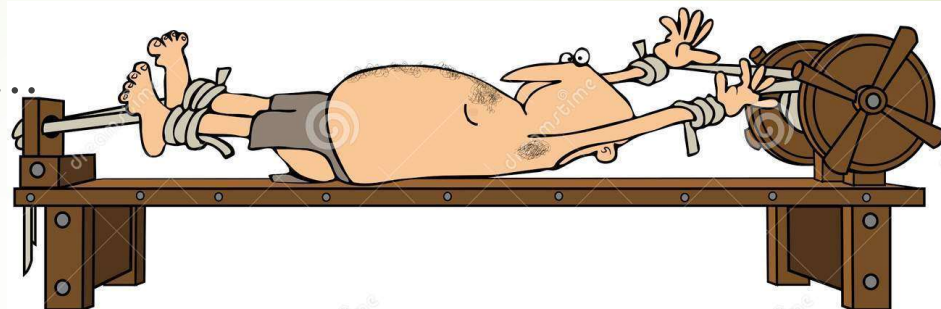


Injury – compensation cycle



Techniques to restore tension balance

- ▶ Not just stretching....



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- ▶ Or Deep Tissue Massage

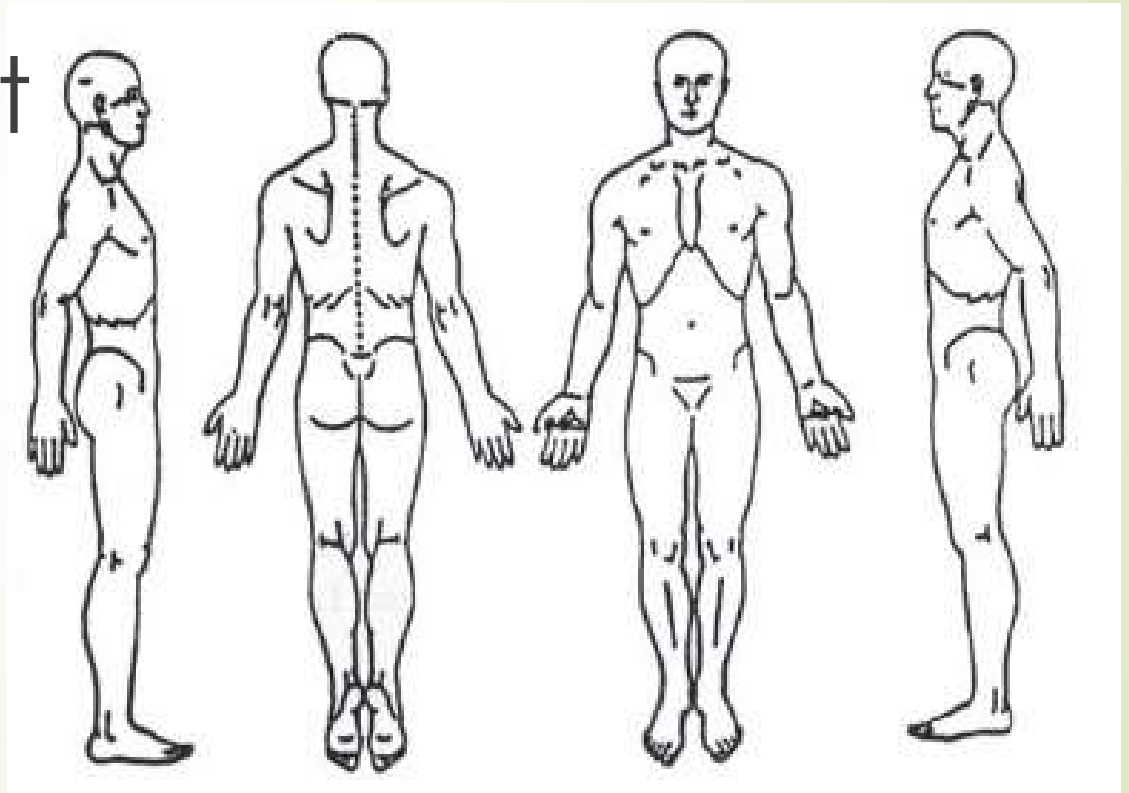


<http://highlandparkcity.us/2018/02/08/will-love-playing-sports-friends/>

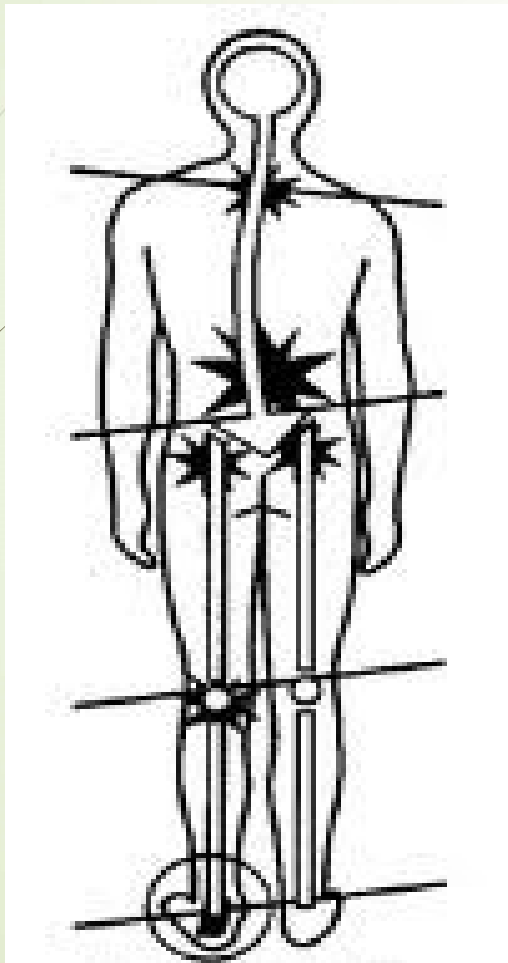
Treatment must target the root cause

Assessment

- Posture/alignment
- Range of motion
- Balance



Typical postural patterns



Tight Upper Trapezius & Levator Scapula

Inhibited Rhomboids & Serratus Anterior

Tight Erector Spinae

Inhibited Gluteals



Inhibited Neck Flexors

Tight Pectorals

Inhibited Abdominals

Tight Iliopsoas

Figure 5.V. Janda's upper and lower crossed syndromes. Medscape, Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins, 2005 with permission.



Techniques must target the root cause

- Release tight structures, strengthen weak structures
- Work WITH the body, not against it.
 - Positional Release Therapy
 - Muscle Energy Technique
 - Biosynchronistics
 - CranioSacral Therapy



Re-establish Balance, change habits

- ▶ Homework
 - ▶ Tension – stretching of tight structures

 - ▶ Strength – or activation
 - ▶ Learn to activate muscles appropriately
 - ▶ Functional strengthening

Takeaway

- ▶ **Everything is connected, Body has a “preferred” balance**
- ▶ **An imbalance can cause pain far from the actual imbalance**
- ▶ **Treating symptoms alone often fails in the long term**
- ▶ **Restoring balance can allow the symptoms to resolve**
- ▶ **Program for maintenance is important**





Thank you!

