



## PHYSICAL THERAPIES

### ACTIVE VERSUS PASSIVE THERAPY

#### Passive Physical Therapy.

Passive physical therapies can include massage, dry needling or acupuncture, manual manipulation, and nerve stimulation machines (e.g. TENS machines).

They tend to work by tricking muscles in spasm to relax and release. However, if you only use passive therapies, the relief is usually temporary as they do not help with the underlying cause.

#### Active Physical Therapy.

Active physical therapy is a key part of building and maintaining the muscles that support your spine. While this does not make degeneration go away, improving the strength and endurance of your supporting muscles can reduce loads across painful parts of your spine.

It is important to have a **physiotherapist who is experienced with managing spine problems** to get the best guidance.



### ACTIVITY MODIFICATION

Change what you do, and how you do it. The first step is working out what movements and actions aggravate your spine problem. Next is retraining how you perform tasks in a way that is less likely to trigger your spine problem, and learning which actions to avoid altogether.



# MOVEMENT IS LIFE

## Exercises.

There are no short-cuts. It takes hard work, dedication, and persistence.

- **Neck Exercises:** Range of movement. Posture retraining. Maintaining movement in your neck. Conditioning the muscles around your neck and shoulder blades (periscapular exercises).
- **Back Exercises:** Posture retraining. Conditioning the muscles of your “core” (front abs, side muscles, and back muscles).



When you **start new exercises**, it is normal to go through an **adjustment period**.

- For the **first 3-6 weeks** your muscles may feel sore and tight as they adapt and adjust.
- Follow the advice of your physiotherapist and persevere through this stage.

If you **stop doing your exercises regularly**, your body can quickly **decondition**.

- Even stopping a **couple of weeks** can cause your symptoms to return, and your body to once again go through an adjustment period when you restart your exercises.

**Spine-friendly exercises** focus on endurance and coordination, without subjecting your spine to heavy loads, sudden impacts, or extreme ranges of movement (e.g. reformer pilates, swimming, hydrotherapy, cycling).

## Reformer Pilates.

Uses specialised machines and bands that work on building your strength and endurance, without putting your spine in a position where it will fail under load.

## Stretches & Neural Glides.

Maintains flexibility and can also help soothe the nerves that cause arm pain or leg pain.

## Home Exercise Program.

Ask your physiotherapist or personal trainer for help building a personalised exercise program which you can maintain at home.

