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The evaluation and treatment of whiplash associated disorder. Evidence based physical therapy perspective

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Much confusion exists regarding the treatment of cervical injury following motor vehicle accidents. Clinicians have debated the very existence of such pathology. It is imperative to understand the pain sciences, central mediators of pain, as well as the neurophysiological connections between the cervical spine, trigeminal cervical nucleus, the ocular system, as well as the vestibular system to grasp the details and fundamental requirements in treating these often times complex conditions. Physical Therapy historically has focused on gaining mobility, strength, and improving posture. This, however, is a very limited focus. What is causing the restriction in motion, how the nervous system alters posture due to proprioceptive and mechanoreceptive mechanisms, and inhibition of the motor system as opposed to weakness need to be identified and discussed in detail. Assessment of the ocular system in regards to coordination and presentation of headaches should accompany the physical examination. Treatment methodology including evidence as it relates to High Velocity Low Amplitude thrust techniques, Dry Needling, Ocular retraining, and a scientific approach to exercise prescription requires consideration beyond the expected routine in therapy. Current ongoing research can help describe the progression and expectation for new studies investigating the correlation between Whiplash Associated Disorder and Concussion.

Biography

Richard Kring completed his graduation in physical therapy in 1997. He finished a four year residency followed by a Fellowship in Orthopedic Manual Therapy (FAAOMPT) from the Ola Grimsby Institute. He received his Ph.D. in 2008 with emphasis in neurophysiology. Currently he is the director of Clinical Research and Clinical Manager in Rehabilitation and Sports Therapy at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, OH. He is on the Board of Instructors, Examiners, and Board of Directors for the Ola Grimsby Institute. Currently active in research, authorship, and teaching residencies, fellowships, and post doctoral candidates throughout the US. Frequent lecturer at State and National levels.