

Care of the Spine: Core Integration Exercises (ENG)

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Your spine is more than just a structure, a part. It is itself intricately connected into the central nervous system (CNS). Many modalities are centered on the spine, but few provide a total integrated maintenance approach.

'Adjusting' the spine, for example, may provide temporary relief and even mobility, but since the spine is a complex of hundreds of joints and muscles, which behave according to habitual use, no adjustment will hold.

Massaging the soft tissue of the spine can be helpful, increasing circulation and promoting relaxation. But again, a massage treatment provides very little learning.

The spine is a core complex which transmits forces energy, through the body. Movement is essential – but what kind?

Yoga is an ancient system modernized which certainly addresses the spine. Along with Tai Chi and all related body mind approaches, Yoga is often a good starting place. But most yoga postures do not address what we now know are essential components of good movement.

The first is lengthening before stretching muscles. Muscles lengthen in order to provide the energy of efficient use.

Muscles also lengthen in connected series, allowing resonance.

Muscles must also be strengthened.

Core Integration exercises start with learning the six major movement pathways, which like highways you learn how they work by traveling on them and relating them to essential exercises we all need, much like we need vitamins.

CI exercises are designed to be in sync with pathways

Each pathway is designed to

a] lengthen, connect, stretch and strengthen every bone, joint, muscle and connective tissue along the movement path;

b] to lengthen some part of the spine and to strengthen it.

Each CI exercise has a built in feedback practice which tells you when it is working well and when it is not. Many people have come to believe that 'sore' muscles after exercise is a positive indicator.

This may be true if you are using your body this way for the first few times. But if this continues, you are creating adverse reactions which will manifest later as arthritis, fibromyalgia, or something else.

With CI you learn to first identify the paths that are and are not working, and then include the exercises and floor lessons you need and respond to.