

JULY 2018

Where is your pain really coming from?

ESSENTIAL PHYSIOTHERAPY

Have you ever been to see a physiotherapist for pain in one part of your body and when they treated you, they focused on a completely different area? While this can be a strange experience, it can be even more puzzling when the treatment actually works. So what is going on, shouldn't pain be treated where it is being felt?

When pain is felt at a different location from where the pain is being caused, this is called 'referred pain' and is actually more common than you think. Exactly why this happens is a little complicated, and in fact, we don't yet understand everything about the way that pain is processed.

Pain is usually felt when something causes damage to the body, sending an electrical impulse to the brain. The brain receives this information and process it to make sense of which part of the body the signal is coming from and what kind of pain it is. When the brain thinks that the pain is coming from a different area than where the damage or signal is actually coming from, this creates the phenomenon of referred pain.

Sometimes referred pain is easy to explain, such as when a nerve becomes injured or irritated, causing the pain to be felt along the length of the nerve. This often feels like a sharp, burning pain that runs in a strip, along the skin. Other examples of referred pain are more difficult to explain and in some cases seem to defy explanation. Perhaps you have heard about the strange phenomenon of phantom pain where amputees continue to feel pain as though it was in the place where their limbs used to be.

Muscular trigger points can also cause referred pain. The mechanism behind this is a bit trickier to understand, but is thought to be explained by tight bands of muscle tissues that cause pain to be felt in predictable patterns around the body.

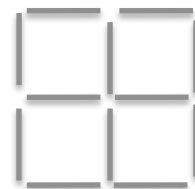
Adding to this, we know that other tissues of the body can cause pain to be felt in a different location, including discs of the spine and internal organs. Many times the internal organs can refer pain in peculiar patterns and this can actually lead to serious illnesses being mistaken for muscular aches and pains. Kidney pain can be felt in the lower back and tragically, some people fail to recognize that they are having a heart attack because they feel pain in their neck and arm, not in their chest.

We also know that not understanding or being afraid of pain can make pain feel stronger. In rare cases, people who have pain in one hand can feel pain just by seeing their other hand moving in a mirror. There are many other fascinating aspects to pain, and understanding how it works is an important part of managing your symptoms. To understand how referred pain may be affecting you, chat to your physiotherapist who can help with any questions.



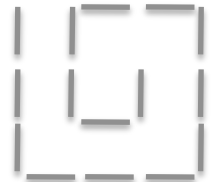
Brain Teasers

1. What surrounds life for us all, starts little, but ends small and gives life it's beginning.
2. What ended on December 12, 1991?



Remove two sticks from the pattern so that you leave only two squares.

Turn this shape in to two squares by removing three sticks.



One Leg Physio #2

Can you throw and catch a ball while balancing on one leg?

Watching a moving ball distracts your eyes from finding a solid a reference point.

Go to www.Oneleg.physio to find out more about these balance challenges.

Ankle Sprains

What is it?

Almost everyone has twisted their ankle at some in their life; in fact, it is one of the most common reasons for people to visit an emergency department. Technically an ankle sprain has occurred when an ankle twists, causing damage to one of its supporting ligaments. The ligaments can be overstretched, partially torn or completely ruptured, depending on the force of the injury. The ligament that is most often involved is the ATFL, or the anterior-talofibular ligament, located on the outside of the ankle.

While there are many ligaments surrounding and supporting the ankle, this ligament is the most vulnerable as it stops the ankle from rolling inwards, which is the way that most ankles are injured. Athletes who jump while moving in different directions, such as basketball players, are the most prone to this injury as they often land on their foot when it is not completely flat, twisting it and injuring the ligaments.

What are the signs and symptoms?

Most people won't have any problem diagnosing that they have a sprained

ankle. The symptoms are pain, swelling and tenderness over the area of damage, usually the outside of the ankle. Depending on the severity of the injury, there may be bruising, reduced range of movement, instability and pain with weight bearing. In more severe injuries there may even be a loss of function, where you are unable to walk on the ankle and numbness and/or a feeling of coldness in the foot.

Why should I see a physiotherapist?

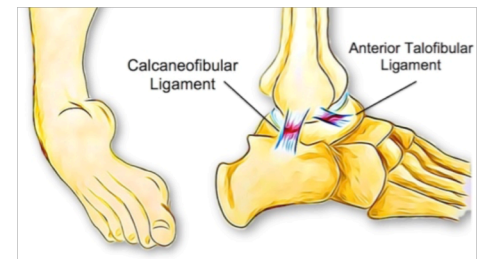
Twisted ankles can also cause a fracture of the ankle, not just ligament damage and many times a bad sprain and a fracture cannot be told apart without proper medical assessment and an X-ray. Your physiotherapist is able to identify if your sprain is severe enough to need further investigation to rule out a fracture. They will also classify the severity of the sprain, providing you with a clear course of treatment. There are many factors that can lead someone to be more prone to fractures, including general hyper flexibility, unsupportive footwear and anatomical structure, however by far the most common reason for an ankle sprain is the existence of a previous sprain without complete rehabilitation.

This is because following an ankle sprain, many people are left with weakness,

instability or stiffness, reduced balance and proprioception – which is a sense of where your body is positioned. These things can mean that the next time your ankle is in a vulnerable position you don't have the strength, awareness of position, balance or structural control to ensure it is in the correct position before putting all your weight through it, causing another injury.

As well as helping you reduce and recover from the pain and swelling of the injury in the early days. Your physiotherapist is trained to identify which issues are likely to affect you in the future and assist you with a personalized rehabilitation program to ensure your ankle is as strong and stable as possible to prevent future injuries.

None of the information in this newsletter is a replacement for proper medical advice. Always see a medical professional for advice on your individual condition.



Answers: 1. The letter L 2. December 11, 1991

Sweet Potato & Cheese Fritters

Ingredients:

- 2 Medium Sweet Potatoes
- 1/2 cup grated Cheddar Cheese
- 2 Large Eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 clove of crushed Garlic
- 2 Tbsp. Olive Oil
- 1/2 Tbsp. Cumin Powder
- 1 Tbsp. Salt & Pepper
- 1 Tbsp. fresh chives
- Tomato salsa for dipping



1. Peel sweet potatoes and grate them into small pieces. Preheat the oven to 200 °C and line a baking tray with foil and spray.
2. Place grated sweet potatoes and cheddar cheese in a bowl along with eggs, salt, garlic and pepper and mix together gently.
3. When mixed thoroughly, use a tablespoon to scoop out small amounts and roll into to small balls.
4. Place the balls onto the baking tray and brush over or spray with olive oil. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown.
5. Garnish with chives and add salsa for dipping.

Allow to cool and serve while still warm.



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