

# Muscle Pain

Occasionally clients will report symptoms that don't quite fit into any particular diagnostic category. These symptoms are usually more general in nature involving larger areas of the muscles.

## **Cramps, Spasms, and Twitches**

Muscle spasms are involuntary contractures of the muscles. Spasms can result from:

- the build-up of lactic acid from overuse of the muscles during exercise and strenuous activity
- muscle fatigue
- dehydration
- poor posture
- stress or anxiety
- sustained positioning of the arms (holding the arms in one position can be more difficult on the body than repetitive use)



## **A muscle in spasm may**

- "twitch"
- cramp or feel like a "charley horse"
- feel hard
- feel tight
- be painful with use
- feel "knotty" or "ropey"

## **Treatment:**

- Ice packs (during initial 2-3 days)
- Hot packs (If sensations persist longer than 2-3 days)
- Slow Stretching
- Drink Plenty of Healthy Fluids
- Limit Caffeine Intake
- Assess and Correct Posture
- Massage
- Therapy Techniques
  - Electrical Stimulator Units



# Muscle Pain

- Ultrasound

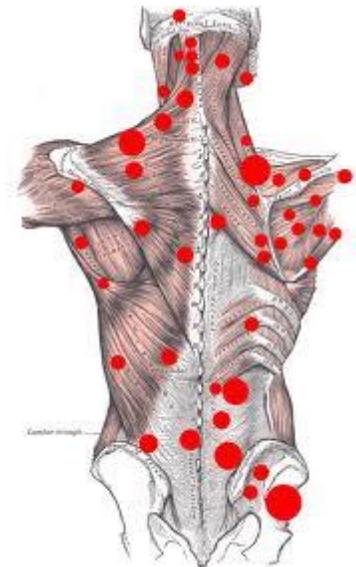
## **Burning, Weakness & Tired, Heavy Arms**

Feelings of burning, weakness and muscle tiredness can also be caused by lactic acid build-up in the muscles.

- The build-up of lactic acid is a normal occurrence in muscles that provides energy and allows strenuous activity over a length of time.
- Normally, lactic acid is flushed out of our system with muscle movement.
- Muscular tension and sustained postures can cause the muscles to tighten and bunch up, limiting the flow of lymphatic fluid and not allowing the lactic acid to be flushed.

## **Treatment:**

- Muscle Conditioning
- Stretching Before and After activity
- Deep Breathing
- Drink Plenty of Healthy Fluids
- Limit Caffeine Intake
- Assess and Correct Posture



## **Myofascial Pain**

The fascia is a sheer coating of tissue that binds all our body organs together and helps to give them their form.

- Normally, all of our tissues are covered in fascia (muscle, tendons, nerves, skin, organs) and will slide and glide over each other smoothly.
- Myofascia supports and separates each individual muscle.
- Awkward, sustained postures or overuse of a muscle can cause a local inflammatory response, decreased blood flow to the area, and irritation in the muscle tissues.
- The myofascia can "bind down" in one location causing referred symptoms in another area.

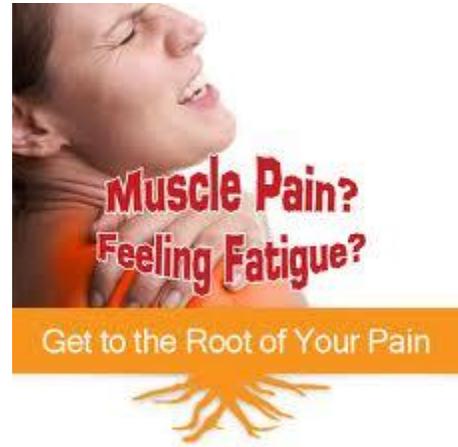
## **Symptoms of myofascial pain include:**

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- general weakness
- broad areas of pain
- tender areas that, when pressed, will radiate pain to other locations (trigger points).
- muscle "hardness"

## **Treatment**

- Massage techniques to release the trigger points
- Ice massage or use of cold packs
- Slow stretches
- Therapy techniques
  - ✓ ultrasound
  - ✓ electrical stimulation



## What else can I do?

In addition to using the above treatment techniques, make sure to include general prevention and healing strategies into your routine:

- Develop good work habits and make positive work environment changes. Apply these tendon and nerve protection principles to home and leisure activities as well as work activities.
  - ✓ **Ergonomics**
  - ✓ Work Habits
  - ✓ **Tendon and nerve protection** guidelines
- Improve general health and promote healing through positive life-style changes (personal wellness)
  - ✓ **Diet and Nutrition**
  - ✓ Stress Reduction
  - ✓ **Exercise** - general conditioning
  - ✓ Diaphragmatic Breathing Techniques
  - ✓ Sleeping Habits and Positioning
- Follow a specific exercise program for the muscles at risk including stretches for the tight muscles, strengthening for the weak muscles and activities that promote strong core and postural muscles
  - ✓ Stretches
  - ✓ Strengthening
  - ✓ Cardiovascular

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✓ Core Exercises