

Massage therapy releasing tightness in Longus Colli can release many other muscles and conditions: A case study

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September 11, 2015.

The importance of this case study is to encourage us to look deeper into our client's problem. Relieving the pain does not always fix the problem. Let's look at what could be the deeper root of the problem. Go for the cure, don't just treat the symptoms. This case study considers the fact that Longus Colli plays a big role in spinal position and therefore affects the spinal cord and how it affects the whole body. We can quickly understand how and why the Longus Colli can be problematic due to whiplash and forward head posture since it is connected to so many vertebrae in the neck from Atlas to T-3. Sadly, we often choose to overlook it; maybe because it requires detailed study of the neck and its contents. Treating the Longus Colli also requires specialized training in order to become confident and comfortable with treating this muscle. Once we overcome that fear we can discover the remarkable relief that we can give to our clients. I too had to overcome this fear.

According to Health Grades Incorporated in 2014, there are 120,000 incidences of whiplash annually in the USA. According to PNMT's whiplash research it's twice that common. Their research considers that not all cases are reported or diagnosed. These statistics show us how high the risk is to injury to Longus Colli. Forward head posture has become known as the "Typical American Posture" according to my Anatomy instructor Dr. Carrie Gilcher.

People are often willing to tolerate discomfort from a problem until finally the symptoms become overwhelming. Then they start seeking treatment for the symptoms. From there we come into play to track down the true problems throughout our continued research and education. The client's concerns should always be addressed first therefore we need to treat symptoms first in some cases as we direct the client to the true issue.

You might assume that my client had whiplash, but she did not. Her problem was forward head posture due to those wonderful computers that makes our lives so much easier. Even worse, a laptop! Laptops, so convenient for us, conveniently working nightmares on the cervical vertebrae. Combine this with the makeshift desk from a dining room table and you have a perfect need for a skilled massage therapist. ie... Us!

Four years ago I started offering chair massages at my client's place of employment she was already seeing an Acupuncturist for her symptoms from menopause. She was able to get relief from several of the symptoms. Along with that the Acupuncturist started treating her for neck and shoulder tension that she too was suffering from. Acupuncture gave her some relief, but kept her coming back for more. I too was able to treat her symptoms of neck and shoulder tension, but also kept her coming back for more. After she came back from a long vacation this summer she came in for her chair massage with a bruise on top of cervical vertebrae 7 spinous process. My client said it was from her acupuncture treatments. Although this might be a common response, it also was a bookmark that made me look deeper. This helped me to realize that we were both treating the symptoms, not the problem. Two weeks later the bruise was almost gone and that area had not been treated during the last session of acupuncture, per my client. I discovered that she was seeing the Acupuncturist every two weeks and seeing me every week. This is when I ask myself; what was the most bizarre possibility for muscle involvement? Longus Colli came to mind, but I was afraid of this muscle. After talking more with the client about her forward head posture, her C-7 protrusion and intense Trapezius tightness, we decided this was worth a try.

WOW!!! The referrals were amazing. Some of the Scalenes were responding also since they too share attachment sites. Referrals went first to her Sternum, then to her Brachii, then to her Scapula. After treating the Longus Colli I continued back to her original concerns, her Trapezius. They were soft as butter. C-7 laid more flush with the rest of her back. The following week I treated it again with less referral, less intensity and the same success. The week later we felt no need to work it again so soon. Just more relaxation work on shoulders and back instead. The next week we worked Longus Colli one more time with a little to no referral. Not to mention she had not needed to see the Acupuncturist since our first treatment. !!!

From there I continued to see her for relaxation and stress relief. Last I treated her she had not had a need to see the acupuncturist for 2 months!

So what it comes down to is treating the symptoms leads to them coming back for more...or... sending the client looking for someone else for more relief. Lucky for me, I was the someone else she sought out for more relief. All this discovered and uncovered through Precision Neuromuscular Therapy!!!

Thank You Doug Nelson!