Physical Therapy for Low Back Pain With a Focus on McKenzie Method For Diagnosis and Treatment: A Case Report

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Background

- Low back pain (LBP) thought to affect 80% of the population
- Decreases work attendance, affects daily activity, and decreases quality of life
- Physical Therapy (PT) is a noninvasive form of treatment that may include manual therapy, physical exercise, deep heat modalities, or a combination.

Outcome

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Purpose

- To review a multifaceted approach to LBP, including a focus on the McKenzie method and paired with conventional PT for a patient with a recurring episode of chronic LBP.

Case Description

- 72-year-old male
- Referred to PT by PCP with a diagnosis of acute LBP without sciatica.
- He received PT once a week for five weeks
- Education on McKenzie method stretching, general stretching and strengthening, soft tissue massage, modalities, and a home exercise program.

Interventions + Home Program

- Ultrasound/electrical stimulation combo
- Soft tissue massage
- Pain levels to 6/10 average
- Lumbar motion without pain
- Strength of bilateral hip flexion to 4/5 with decreased pain
- Tenderness to palpation
- Not all objective measures were obtained due to patient self-discharge.
- Patient phone call 8 weeks post treatment stating he was doing well

Outcome

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Discussion + Conclusion

- Patient ended therapy because he wanted a corticosteroid injection
- Results showed improvements in pain, activity, ROM, strength, and tenderness
- Compliance with treatment may have led to increased improvements
- More research into optimal McKenzie repetitions per day as well as compliance with this protocol
- More research into McKenzie exercises exclusively compared to conventional PT
- May benefit from steroid injection followed by continued McKenzie exercise to reduce symptoms and avoid surgery

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References