



Fitness Frontline



Pro-active Rehab

- self-paced learning module -



For many years the sports industry has been the leader in musculo-skeletal rehabilitation, with injured players undertaking a vigorous and sustained daily program of both active and passive treatments – all designed to speed up the rehab process. In some sporting clubs it's a 24 hour rehab process, the aim being to get players back on the field in the shortest possible time.

The rehab procedure for regular folks has been left behind, with people going to a couple of appointments a week, mainly for passive treatments that include rubbing, crunching, heating, vibrating and electric muscle twitching, aided and abetted by doping and as the final straw, surgery. (Of course the cause of the dysfunction is unlikely be due to a lack of these modalities. Plus, the responsibility for getting better is devolved to someone wearing a white coat.)

The pro-active rehab program is for people with personally-generated joint and muscle pain (that's 80% of people) who want to take responsibility for their joint and muscle pain and spend extended periods of their own time doing the flexibility exercises that draw the skeleton back in alignment, coupled with strength exercises that better support the skeleton as it goes about its daily tasks.

Pro-active rehab

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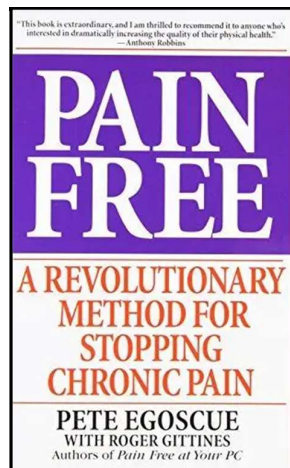
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CONTENTS

The point of difference	4
Pro-active rehab workouts	5
Managing the risk of musculo-skeletal dysfunction	6
Back in Alignment	7



Pain Free by Pete Egoscue
is worth getting.

SOME EGOSCUE QUOTES

Age is not the determining factor in health.

Effective therapies treat the whole of the body as a unit

The cause of the pain is rarely at the site of the pain.

The less we move the less we are capable of moving

Pain is the body's voice. Listen to your body.

Having been to Egoscue's clinic in San Deigo as a paying client, I'm indebted to his work in the musculo-skeletal health field. It's original, thoughtful and effective.

THE POINT OF DIFFERENCE

The point of difference between the rehab procedures for elite sport participants and 'regular folks' is that on the sporting field, muscles, ligaments and tendons are torn by trauma. Players suffer from injuries. The treatment is intensive, using a range of therapeutic modalities – for extended periods of time.

Meanwhile most of the joint and muscle pain that incurs in 'regular folks', particularly from the knees up to the neck, is personally generated by

- skeletal misalignment caused by tight muscles attached to the pelvis
- poor support for the skeleton due to a lack of strength

People are suffering from personally-generated dysfunctions. They are 'tipped over the edge' by incidents that people in good musculo-skeletal health take in their stride.

The treatment of personally-generated dysfunctions needs to be different from the treatment for traumatic injuries.

Most rehab programs lack strength and flexibility programs of sufficient frequency, duration and intensity to dramatically speed up the rehab process. They focus on passive treatments, when the lack of passive treatments is not the underlying cause of the dysfunction.

The point of difference with the Pro-Active Rehab program is that its principal focus is on people, themselves spending long periods of time each day for at least a week doing the flexibility and strength exercises designed to get their bodies back into better alignment and strong enough to be supported in good alignment.

The Pro-Active Rehab program is an intensive rehab program that caters for

- individuals who already have back pain (and other musculo-skeletal pain) and enrol in the program themselves
- people from corporate organisations who are at grave risk of a serious musculo-skeletal breakdown
- people from corporate organisations who have had a musculo-skeletal breakdown and are on workers compensation.

The program involves one-on-one-assessments and a minimum of a week of daily strength and flexibility sessions in a group class.

The underlying principal is that rehabilitation is the full time job for a week, for anyone, particularly for a person on workers compensation.

The program is badged as the Pro-Active Rehab program to make the distinction that it is

- active, not passive treatment. Most rehab programs have as their core treatment, hands on, passive, one-on-one therapies, 2 or 3 times a week for half an hour
- is a week-long, 7 hours a day, graduated workout program, program for anyone, particularly for people in disabling pain
- a program directed at the cause of the problem (the muscles that have taken the pelvis and the bones above and below it out of alignment), not the symptoms (the ligaments, tendons and muscles of the lower back that have been stretched beyond their pain threshold and herniated discs that are pressing against the spinal column.)

Currently, rehab programs tend to involve one-on-one passive treatments. There are a number of drawbacks.

- A lack of passive treatment is not the underlying cause of most joint and muscle pain.
- It's usually the case that the therapeutic attention is directed at the spot where the pain is, not where the underlying cause of the problem is, which is usually tight muscles attached to the pelvis and the bones above and below it.
- Attacking the spot where it hurts tends to be symptom relieving in nature, provide temporary relief that leads to more therapy after the effect of the last treatment has worn off.
- People aren't encouraged to spend 7 hours a day doing their specific and general strength and flexibility exercises – and general fitness activities.
- For most people with lower back pain, the frequency, intensity and duration of their strength and flexibility rehab program is so low the chances of a speedy recovery are greatly compromised. Attending a physiotherapy session twice a week is not the quickest route to a speedy recovery.
- At \$250 an hour or part thereof on the plinth, manipulative therapy is very expensive treatment. Even with private health insurance or a Medicare health plan, going to a manipulative therapist twice a week can be out of the question.
- The problem for so many people is that the duration of the rehab strategy employed by elite level sporting clubs is not on the radar.

PRO-ACTIVE REHAB WORKOUTS

Whilst our recommended program is 7 hours, 5 days a week, there are shorter workouts, all designed to loosen off the muscles that have taken the pelvis and the bones above it out of alignment – and strengthen the major muscles of the body.

1. 10 minute group work-place workout – with strength and flexibility exercises being rotated during the week.
2. 20 minute workout - our recommended back pain maintenance program comprising a suite of flexibility and strength exercises. Recommended for both work and home.
3. 1 hour Back in Alignment session conducted by fitness centres - with more exercises and some being done for longer periods. It's a program recommended for people who are of back pain and those who already have it. The workout can also take place at work, or at home – or both.
4. 2 hour workout - an extension of the one hour workout with some exercises being done for longer periods of time. Our recommended workout for people in pain - at work at a rehab centre and home. This program is ideal for someone who can spend 2 hours on the floor at home in the evening.
5. 4 hour workout - an extension of the two-hour program with an extra rotation of the deep, relaxing flexibility exercises and a strength training session.
6. 7 hour workout - an intensive (though not strenuous) program over 5 or more days, designed to kick-start the rehab process by getting the body back into better alignment – and strong enough to do everyday tasks without breaking down. Involves three rotations of the exercises in the 2-hour program, plus strength and aerobic fitness workouts and inner mental training.

To be able to spend 7 hours a day in supervised classes, promises to have a dramatic impact on speeding up the rehab process.

In short it's a full week, devoted to becoming stronger, more flexible, back in better alignment and becoming focused on being in good musculo-skeletal health. That's the quickest and cheapest route to restoring poor musculo-skeletal health to good.

In the Pro-Active Rehab Workout program, people (particularly those under 'workers compensation orders') spend 7 hours a day, are involved in

- a slow, gentle flexibility program designed to loosen off the tight muscles that have taken the pelvis and the bones above it out of alignment.
- a graduated strength training program designed to support the skeleton in good alignment and the body able to do everyday tasks without breaking down. The session involves strength exercises with and without the use of strength training machines.
- a graduated aerobic fitness training program. A lot of people with musculo-skeletal dysfunction are in poor metabolic health
- inner mental training, designed to relax mind and body and get the mind focused on getting the body back into good health.

This is the rehab practice that takes the lead from sports injury rehabilitation. To be able to spend 7 hours a day in supervised classes, promises to have a dramatic impact on speeding up the rehab process.

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The Pro-Active Rehab program is an affordable option. For corporate organisations, depending on how large your staff is, paying a modest amount to either keep your staff out of the workers compensation arena, or speeding up their recovery could save you hundreds, thousands or millions of dollars in workers compensation premiums.

MANAGING THE RISK OF MUSCULO-SKELETAL DYSFUNCTION

The Pro-Active Rehab program is also recommended for organisations that want to avoid musculo-skeletal complaints being tipped into the workers compensation black hole.

When between 40% and 50% of people in workforce groups give themselves 5/10 or less for the current condition of their musculo-skeletal health, nipping the problem in the bud makes eminent sense.

Lau Tzu said, 'A large problem could have been solved easily when it was small problem.' When it comes to workers compensation, he might well have said, 'A large expense could have been a small expense if the problem had been treated early enough.'

How many people would take up an offer from an employer who said, 'If you take a week's holiday leave, I'll pay for your attendance at the Pro-Active rehab program.'

Sound like a good deal? It is for someone who's fair dinkum about relieving their back pain.

We believe the Pro-Active Rehab format will appeal to both employers and workers compensation insurers alike. In some cases it will pay an employer to send people to Pro-Active Rehab program – outside of the workers compensation system.

When workers compensation insurers start rating their premiums against risk, keeping people in good musculo-skeletal health is going to save money, heaps of it.

In a nutshell the aim of the Pro-Active Rehab program is to provide members of the community, together with people on workers compensation (and those at grave risk to an organisation's workers compensation arrangements) with an intensive, supervised musculo-skeletal rehab program designed to loosen tight muscles and strengthen weak muscles, so they quickly get back into better alignment and pain free in the shortest possible time.

If passive therapies are to be included in the rehab mix, they may speed up the rehab process.



You'll find details of the assessments and strength and flexibility exercises used in the Pro-active Rehab program in the Back in Alignment book.

