



THE PULSE

From the Longevity Health Center Team

June 2023

Fascia | 'faSH(ē)ə | (mainly British also facia)

Many people suffering with chronic pain or stiffness believes their symptoms are caused by muscles or joints. However, their pain and tightness are commonly due to fascia, a thin band of connective tissue wrapping around and supporting every structure in the body. Recent discoveries have expanded the definition of fascia beyond merely supporting organs, muscles, and bones. It is now understood that fascia also surrounds all cells, nerves, joints, tissues, tendons, and ligaments. When we were young and learned the spiritual song 'Dem Bones' which sang in part: "...knee bone connected to the thigh bone; thigh bone connected to the hip bone; hip bone connected to the backbone..." what can be said is we were anatomically celebrating fascia. Fascia is the binder between all tissues and cells in our bodies.

Fascia is a connective tissue made up mostly of collagen and is a stringy, white, mesh-like substance. Between the multiple layers of the tissue, a liquid called hyaluronan helps create desired movements of the various body parts. Fascia does more than bind and provide internal structure, it "feels" the world around it and can tighten up when stressed. Inflammation and trauma can damage fascia by drying the hyaluronan liquid. Fascia then becomes sticky and thickens, creating a loss of mobility and painful trigger points.

Healthy fascia is flexible and supple whereas unhealthy fascia is gummy, sticky resulting in tightness and pain. Determining the difference between muscle and joint pain from myofascial pain is one of the many conditions our providers at Longevity Health Center can help differentiate. Most times, if pain worsens with activity, it may be a muscle or joint injury, while conversely if movement and activity (as well as heat) tend to improve the pain symptoms, a myofascial condition may be diagnosed.

Chronic aches and pain, and commonly experienced tightness in necks, backs and extremities are often related to fascia problems. The resulting pain and discomfort affect our mood, productivity, sleep, diet, relationships, and overall quality of life. For more information about fascia, check out the article: Muscle Pain: It May Actually Be Your Fascia at hopkinsmedicine.org.

Longevity Health Center offers most of the commonly recommended therapies for myofascial conditions: acupuncture, massage therapy, prescriptions for anti-inflammatory diets, herbal therapies, and dietary supplements as well as heat therapies and focused stretching. Treatment of fascia pain will often require a combination of therapies.

A relaxing, light-pressure massage offers great benefits to your body's superficial fascia by keeping your fascia loose and hydrated, while detoxing your bodily waste at a much faster rate. Deeper massage modalities address the deeper fascia that can cause restricted movement, problems with posture, and tendencies towards injury. Acupuncture can target trigger points, which are commonly called muscle knots but are densely bound fascia adhesions pulling and pressing upon surrounding muscles. Acupuncture also supports overall circulation and nerve conduction to further assist the body in more rapid recovery.

LHC offers a Therapeutic Class Series as a part of our Movement Therapy program. Our newest series, Therapeutic Stretch Class, specifically targets lengthening the deeper fascia bands for ease of movement and pain relief. This stretch therapy helps to protect you from injury with expertly designed positions to lengthen and hydrate all your deeper tissues. This keeps you moving more freely, more easily, and more pain-free.

As an integrative healthcare clinic, LHC's team of licensed healthcare providers and expert support staff can also help identify the cause of pain, offer therapies or classes to relieve the pain and provide education to further manage or prevent it from returning.

Therapeutic Class Program

Relaxation Series

3:30 pm-4:30 pm-Fridays, June 2, 9, 16

Stretch Series

11:00 am-12:00 pm-Fridays, June 16, 23, 30

Stay tuned for the Therapeutic Balance Class coming this summer!

HOURS OF OPERATION

MONDAY - FRIDAY 9AM - 6PM
SATURDAY 10AM - 3PM

BY APPOINTMENT • INSURANCE ACCEPTED

HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSURE

Juneteenth

Monday, 6/19

"Fascia does not discriminate, it simply keeps growing and eventually hardening into whatever shapes you make most often with your body. Unfortunately today that most likely means your body resembles the shape of an office chair." -Janu Vanier

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