

Articulation

Hanneken Full Potential Physical Therapy Newsletter February 2011

OBSERVATIONS OF A PHYSICAL THERAPIST AND A FATHER

As a Physical Therapist for over 37 years, I have been privileged to learn many things from my patients. Something that has stayed with me over the years is that you cannot take something away without replacing it with something else. For example, we should not take away tightness without giving back strength and stability. We don't take away crutches until we have given back enough strength, flexibility, and balance to walk safely. This is true in many areas of our life.

This leads me to two crusades that have come from my years of observing trends and my experience as a Physical Therapist and father. First, when I was a new father, 30 plus years ago, car seats were used only in the car. Second, and I am not recommending this, we always were told to put our babies to sleep on their stomach. My point in the following paragraphs is to talk about what we have taken away and for you to think about what needs to be done to replace this loss.

Today's car seats are made to serve multiple functions. They are a baby carrier, can be attached to a stroller, used as a portable place for a nap, and can be secured in the car. In my history the car seat rarely came out of the car. Babies were carried to the car, strapped in and then when we reached our destination the baby was removed and carried from that point on. What have we taken away: the amount of time we hold and carry our babies in our arms? We decrease the skin to skin or physical contact time, the opportunity to talk to them eye to eye, the ability for them to see the world (not just the sky or ceiling), and the use of the babies muscles

to learn to control their body in space.

Secondly, with respect to not putting our babies to sleep on their stomach, I must stand by the research as it is today. SIDS is a very real and devastating concern. The guidelines our pediatricians lay out for us must be followed and so our children are put to sleep on their back. However, in doing so, what we have taken away is: the strength the child develops from lifting the head, the work required to explore the environment when they are awake, the pushing of the arms to learn to roll onto their backs, and we have created a situation of sustained pressure on the back of the head.

In both instances what has been taken away is easily replaced. We need to give back to our babies the situations that will allow them to grow and develop their muscles, their sense of position in space, balance and the ability to explore the environment. How we do this is limited only by our creativity. The key is to intentionally hold

and carry our children more. This sets up the situation where they are forced to use muscles that will build their postural support and core stabilizers. This also puts them in a position that will allow us to talk to them and interact in a very personal and one on one manner. Sleeping on the back and spending time in a car seat / carrier puts hours of pressure on the back of the head. Holding your child relieves this pressure and frees them to look around. Playing with your baby while having them lay on their stomach in front of you is a fun activity for both of you. Or, place the baby on its stomach on your thighs in front of a mirror, encourages the child to lift its head and strengthen the neck and upper back. Along with being fun it encourages them to begin to push with their arms and strengthen the arm and shoulder girdle. All of this is important for postural and core development. What is even better is that this is not exercise but play time for you and your child so it builds an even closer relationship and bond between the parent and child. How good is that!



KNOW YOU HAVE A CHOICE - USE YOUR VOICE

Physical therapy is one of the most important benefits your insurance plan could have available. Just ask someone who was in an accident and how valuable those benefits became to get their life back to normal.

Often when one needs physical therapy there can be stress, confusion, pain, and unfamiliarity with what is about to happen next. Under Michigan law, a doctor must refer you to a physical therapist. Over 40 states allow a patient to come and see a physical therapist without a referral but Michigan has yet to pass this legislation. So you must still go through your doctor to get to us.

If or when you ever need the services of a physical therapist, it is important to keep in mind that the patient has a right to choose where they can go to receive physical therapy. All you have to say to your doctor is that you prefer to go toHe/she can then write an order and you can call to schedule your PT.

Even if you have had surgery, you have a choice. Potentially, you could be in PT for 4-6 weeks or longer with a tough situation. Make sure you are going to a place that is your choice and is meeting your needs. Physical therapy is a diverse profession and there can be marked differences in PT providers. Even if you start with one PT provider – you are not stuck there if you are not satisfied. You can choose to change providers.

We still have choices in our medical field but we have to be informed and use our voice to keep those choices.

Vincent Hanneken P.T.

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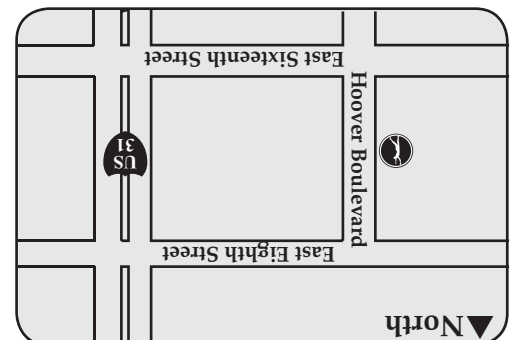
What Our Clients Have To Say:

“(Before physical therapy) legs hurt to walk, couldn’t lift arms, couldn’t turn head.
(Now) When I look back at the condition I was in when I began therapy, it’s hard to believe how great I feel today. It’s wonderfull!!”

--- Ted Bosch

For more patient testimonials, please visit fullpotentialpt.com!

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