



DID YOU KNOW?



INSIDE:

- ✓ *Walking, Golfing and Gardening... Oh, My!*
- ✓ *Patient Success Story*
- ✓ *Play the Referral Game*

*Come Back
to PT!*

**Give us a call us at
616-537-2864 to book
your appointment today!**

Locally, a large segment of Holland/Zeeland's physician practices have joined either Spectrum or Holland Hospital over the last 10-15 years thus improving efficiency by reducing the duplication of services, but in the process changing the local culture of privately-owned practices who operated autonomously. Those were privately-owned practices with whom we historically formed relationships – one private practice to another. At that time, referrals from the family doctor would often revolve around who provided the best service for their patients. Here is that competition idea at work again, those who do their job well are rewarded with future business, as it should be.

What a doctor really wants when s/he has a patient who has a musculoskeletal problem is for someone to solve that problem. Medication could be part of the answer but a good physical therapist could be a real asset to the doctor as well. Historically doctors found their particular PT or PT practice that, through experience and results, solved their patient's problems much more often than not. Currently, this process has changed substantially as physicians who work for a hospital system are encouraged, or perhaps forced, to refer their patients to their hospital's physical therapy department. Gone is the idea of referring to the physical therapist or practice who has had the most success with that particular injury.

In effect, there is no choice in this process... or is there? True, there is no choice if it operates purely from the hospital's policy. However, there is still choice if you, the patient, understand you have a choice in where to receive services.

Exercising your right of choice is still an option in our medical system and hopefully we can continue to operate in our community and country with this fundamental right.

So, when your doctor recommends that you handle your problem with PT, remember you have a choice in where to receive your care, you just need to voice it and be firm about your decision. Yet, even more fundamental

to this statement is to remember the message in many of our newsletters which perpetually advocates for you to use physical therapy and the philosophy of an active program to get better and teach you how to stay better. In the big picture, as a result of handling your problem with PT, one can actually learn how to prevent future injuries, making your time with us an investment as well.

In this day and age of increased regulations and consolidation of medical corporations, health care is tending to become less personal with less touch and time to understand your unique needs. People's problems are not getting any simpler in our complicated world and as a result, they really need more of a doctor's time, not less. At Full Potential, we are still a "small is beautiful" independent practice but we are BIG on knowing your name, treating you like an individual, and getting to know you as well as your problems and needs. We are all about creating a solution that works and in the process an investment for a better future. We know you can choose a different provider or a different type of service so we take no individual who chooses our facility for granted.

As an organization, Full Potential is driven to get results because getting results is the only reason we have remained in business for the past 27 years; we have no monopoly or guaranteed referral connections in our community. In truth, telling your doctor your therapy at Full Potential was a very helpful experience is huge in keeping our relationship with the doctor a positive one. We do not mind competition, what we do mind is the removal of our opportunity to help you by taking away your choices.

As another example of choice reduction, both hospital systems in Holland, if you work for them, make your out-of-pocket cost much greater to come and see us versus their PT program. Since both organizations employ a lot of people in Holland, this in effect creates just another barrier for someone to access a provider of their choice. This is not keeping the playing field level which should be based on results and competence versus limiting a doctor's referral options and increased cost as barriers.

I have been practicing PT in Holland for 35 years and know many of the doctors (even though many have retired, too) who used to refer readily to Full Potential but now

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WALKING, GOLFING AND GARDENING... OH, MY!

By the time this letter is resting in your hands a big part of summer will be over and for those of us who are quite active with walking, gardening, golfing or even pickle ball, we will have a decent "trial by fire" understanding of how our body is holding up. Repetitive stress is the classic way imbalances in our system creep into our attention with whispers to downright yells of pain informing us something is not right.

Simply speaking, repetitive stress is the mechanism where stress (pressure, tension inflammation, and instability) summates causing pain in a joint or muscle group as a result of weakness, fatigue or tightness.

Each of these common activities puts demands on specific areas of our body and since knowledge is power, outlined below is an overview of how the body is challenged by each one.

Walking and jogging are two of the most common repetitive activities one can engage and they have their own unique set of stresses that ask a lot from those joints whose motion is predominately hinge like as with the ankle and knee. Limited motion in those joints along with the hip can generate stress onto your Achilles' tendons with pain emerging in the back of the ankle. And did you know weak gluts (buttocks muscles) make your calf work harder per step and so cause more tightness?

Tight ankle flexibility can play a role in making the arch of the foot flatten more than normal and lead to plantar fasciitis (pain in the arch/heel of the foot) which, if you have ever had it, you never want to repeat it. It can be tough to overcome and certainly can interrupt a fun summer. Or, such tightness can ask the knee, if it is the weak link, to work harder. Also, shoe ware is often less supportive in the summer and adds potential for arch pain and bunion/toe stress. Is it not interesting how interrelationships like weak gluts or tight calves or even pelvic alignment can be factors in repetitive stress

on the foot/ankle and as a result, why it is important to assess a situation fully?

Golf is another popular sport in the summer and from a joint standpoint puts strong rotational strain into the hips and spine. The hips and spine have their tendencies to tighten over time anyway and so we go out to golf after 6 months of laying off the sport and then ask the year older body to match last year's drives. It is a "big ask" especially as we (I hate to say it) get older. Stiffness and muscle weakness are all too common with the aging process. And, it is interesting if we are a right handed golfer how the rotatory strain on the spine and hips is more stressful since the hips and spine tend to move less well into left rotation making the sport even more problematic for right-handed golfers.

Related to this, how do we damage a knee if we have tight hips and spine into left rotation? Well, who is going to absorb more torque pivoting off that fixed left foot with a tight back and left hip? You got it, the knee! And as discussed above the knee has minimal rotational ability, so this is a great way to strain or tear a cartilage (meniscus).

Rotation is a complex motion and is quite vulnerable to getting restricted especially in the mid spine and hips which unfortunately will require the lower back to rotate more.

This is a good example of how the body compensates to help us be able to continue to do an activity but with some cost.

The lower spine is quite vulnerable to breakdown (osteoarthritis) due to concentrated rotational stresses over time and since golf is a whole-body rotational sport it is difficult to directly protect the lower back. The best policy is to improve motion where you can (hips, thoracic spine) to distribute the stress away from the lower back. Unfortunately, there are many golfers who love to play the sport without enough rotation in the key joints to avoid compensatory movements and so experience a strain which interrupts there summer.

(Continues inside under "Oh, My...")

Nagging pain that won't go away? Call us at 616-537-2864 to book your appointment today!

DID YOU KNOW? *continued*

have one type of barrier or another to contend with to refer outside of their organization. I sincerely miss those relationships which go back decades, but the “times are a-changin.” As a result, you will have to advocate for yourself when it comes to being referred. It is still a workable situation if you know your options and for all the times you have chosen us in the past, we thank you.

In closing, we feel it is important for you to be informed on your rights as a patient in this particular area of health care. No matter what the situation, you have a right to choose where to get your physical therapy. Unfortunately, if you work for Spectrum or Holland Hospital, it may cost you more, but perhaps there is more to consider than just cost. And, if you choose us and we are not able to treat your condition with confidence, we will help you find a provider who can. We are here to serve you.

To choice, competence and competition,

*Vincent Hauweken
PT/Owner*

OH, MY! *continued*

Pickle ball and tennis are two sports that mix in the demands of both golf and walking/jogging as they need quick lower extremity actions, fast rotational motion in the trunk and extreme shoulder movements. A lot of moving parts and so we do see our fair share of pickle ball injuries from these very stresses.

The other activity that summer provides more opportunity to participate is gardening. And, as any gardener knows, the repetitive stress associated with gardening is squatting and kneeling. More knee stress for sure. Knee stiffness is a problem to squat down to the ground but it is even harder is getting up.

Depending on your age and condition of your knees, I think one of the easiest ways to reduce knee strain is with a garden stool. The one listed below rated 4.5 to 4.8 for function and is called TomCare Garden Kneeler and was evaluated at <https://www.gardenerbasics.com/blog/best-gardening-stools-for-seniors>. You can buy it from Amazon. It features a kneeling pad with handles so you can use your arms to push back up; you can flip over and sit on it and it can hold

a few tools too. Looks like a winner to help reduce knee and back stress.

These three sports or activities are commonly a frequent part of one's summer fun. When we look at these activities what becomes apparent is whether the body can deliver what is needed, when it is needed in the amount needed over time? Direction, speed, force, endurance and degree of motion play heavily into the mechanics of an activity, and mechanics relate directly to overuse and strain.

If you find your “trial by fire” participation in a sport or activity is not going as well as planned or if you are fading at the end of the season, then often what is at fault is your mechanics.

The question is, can you get the necessary motion with enough strength to deliver what is needed to enjoy your activity on a repetitive basis?

What you are dealing with in a repetitive activity is called a kinetic chain. Kinetic just means motion and

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We love providing educational content for our Patients each month! Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to fill out our survey! This will allow us to provide the most relevant content, that YOU want to read about each month!



Has your pain come back? We can help! Call us at 616-537-2864 to book your appointment today!

chain is the linkages between motion centers like ankle to knee, knee to hip, or hip to lower back as they are all working and relating to each other with a particular movement like a golf swing or the stride in a jog. Analyzing your kinetic chain can identify where you are compensating and overusing along with who is creating that reaction in your body.

If you are not finishing the season as you would like, where pain and stiffness are now unwanted guests in your "home", then consider getting a kinetic chain evaluation at Full Potential PT. We "have your back" when it comes to protecting your feet, knees, hips and of course, your back.

As stated earlier, knowledge is power and this power comes in the form of understanding how to enhance your key movements so you can keep the fun in the game throughout your season. Six months of "rest" this winter will not put you any further ahead, treatment at Full Potential will. Here you can practice what you learned this fall all winter and up your odds for fun in the future. Call your doctor and get a referral or call us to better understand how we can help you.

Live to Move, Move to Live.

*Vincent Hauueken
PT/Owner*

PATIENT *Success* STORY



I CAN NOW SIT OR DRIVE FOR SEVERAL HOURS

Initially I struggled to sit and drive for more than a few minutes without pain. I can now sit or drive for several hours. There is some pain, but 95% of it goes away with stretches. No pain meds needed.

Full Potential did a great job analyzing and adjusting stretches and strengthening routines as my back progressed. Staff is very kind and friendly.

Jeff H.



 **Full Potential**
PHYSICAL THERAPY

*You can help someone else find
THEIR Success Story —
AND win a Meijer gift card!*



PLAY THE REFERRAL GAME

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Your Name

Our New Patient's Name!

Date Of Referral

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