

The Immediate Effects of Manual Stretching and Cervicothoracic Junction Manipulation on Cervical Range of Motion and Upper Trapezius Pressure Pain Thresholds

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Repetitive use, postural issues, or trauma often precede the myofascial pain and restricted range of motion we see each day with our patients who present with neck pain.

The ability of spinal manipulation to reduce pain, increase range of motion, and decrease muscle sensitivity has been well-established. However, this study examined the effects of both HVLA (high-velocity low amplitude) spinal manipulation and stretching in a randomized setting.

The results indicate that both stretching and manipulation can provide positive effects on pressure pain threshold levels. Additionally, the manipulation group had statistically significant improvements in range of motion.

In our experience, a combination of modalities, including both manipulation and stretching, can provide fantastic results for patients who are suffering from neck pain.

“Spinal manipulative therapy has been associated with onset of LTP (long term potentiation) at both spinal and supra spinal levels.”

“Previous studies have also found a reduction in inflammatory cytokines and pain mediators in surrounding joints after manipulation.”

“This study demonstrates the effectiveness of HVLA thrust manipulation at the CT junction compared to manual stretching of the upper trapezius in increasing pressure pain thresholds in the upper trapezius and improving range of motion.”

