



Patient Profile

Patient:

A 19-year-old female student

Mechanism of injury:

The patient sustained an injury to the right thoracic area while cheerleading when another cheerleader fell on her while her right arm was elevated and abducted.

Symptoms:

She suffered from intermittent aching and sometimes-sharp thoracolumbar back pain of a 4 - 8/10 severity on the VAS. The pain was worse on the right side and worsened with standing, sitting, running and exercising. There was no pain, tingling or numbness of the right arm.

Additional background:

The patient underwent 6 weeks of exercise-based physical therapy at another facility with no improvement. Her orthopedic physician referred her to Pro-Motion Physical Therapy for manual therapy-based treatment.

815.521.4400

1010 S. Ridge Road
Minooka, IL 60447
815-521-4400
Fax: 815-521-9709
MovingPainFree.com

Manual therapy-based treatment helps thoracic and costovertebral injury where exercise-based therapy fails

Initial Assessment

A Pro-Motion therapist determined that the patient experienced pain on right rotation and right side bending of the thoracic spine, made worse with overpressure. She suffered pain on passive accessory testing with an aching pain at the right T12 facet joint and sharp pain on passive accessory testing of the costovertebral joint and rib angles at T11 and T12. These findings correlated with X-rays, which showed subluxation of the 12th rib at the costovertebral joint. A bone scan was normal.

Treatment Protocol

The patient was treated with specific manual joint mobilization to the T10-T12 motion segments, right facet joints, costovertebral joints and rib angles of the lower right thoracic spine.

Treatment Outcome

The young woman attended seven physical therapy sessions at Pro-Motion Physical Therapy and reached full pain resolution and no spasms. She regained pain-free full range of motion of the thoracic spine with no pain on overpressure and no pain on passive accessory testing on the thoracic spine. She was able to return to exercise, including upper body strengthening exercises in the gym. Upon discharge, the patient's cheerleading coach was to introduce a strengthening program and she was able to resume cheerleading.

Conclusion

The patient had an excellent response to a brief duration of treatment with a manual therapy-based approach. The care she received at Pro-Motion Physical Therapy allowed her to resolve 10 weeks of pain that resisted previous treatment elsewhere and enabled her to return to her sport.

Discussion

Evidence-based treatment such as manual joint mobilization has been proven to relieve pain to the thoracic spine and costovertebral joints in a short period of time – just seven visits, in this case. This approach allows joints to return to normal range of motion without pain, after which strengthening exercises can allow patients to return to their previous high level of functioning. This and other world-class care allows Pro-Motion to help athletes from all levels with sports injury rehabilitation. We use sport-specific exercises to help patients heal faster and stronger. Just as important as getting patients healthy again, we spend time on education so they know how to keep from re-injuring themselves once they're back in the game.