

# **A WHOLE LOT OF MUSCLE, BUT NO DOCTOR!**

By Cheryl Zemont-Payne

In this age of extraordinary medical science it is amazing that there are no academic medical solutions for simple muscle pain. We have two eyes and we have one eye doctor. We have two feet and a foot doctor. We have two ears and an ear doctor...one heart and a heart doctor. But with approximately 696 muscles in the human body, there is no practice licensed by the medical community to treat and/or cure common muscle pain.

Many physicians are unfamiliar with "myofascial" pain disorder (problems associated with the tissue connecting the muscles). Frequently they treat chronic or acute muscle pain by prescribing muscle relaxers or pain killers, which often fail to alleviate pain and can have harmful side effects. If pain persists, patients are referred for chiropractic treatment, physical therapy or surgery. Most of these techniques treat bones, not muscles, and most do not address the source of muscle-related problems. Medical analysis has failed to identify or to properly treat muscle dysfunction, the pain cycle and trigger point pain.

## **Diane's Story**

A perfect example of incorrectly diagnosed myofascial dysfunction occurred in the case of Diane, a former client. Diane was afraid she had cancer. I was working as a licensed massage therapist for Focus Massage, a specialty group associated with Nova Care Physical Therapy, when I met her. She told me how she had fallen backward in her office chair and hit her head on the floor. After two months, she began feeling pain in her back. Her doctor prescribed muscle relaxers and pain pills. The medication did not provide lasting relief and Diane was unhappy with the side effects. Her doctor recommended a chiropractor. The chiropractic treatment worked temporarily but the pain returned. She tried physical therapy with similar results. When I met her, her alternatives had been exhausted. She was frustrated by chronic pain and diminished hope.

Diane's untreated muscle dysfunction had led her down a dangerous path. She had begun highly invasive testing at her doctor's recommendation. She was tested for colon and kidney cancer. At this point, her hair started falling out. Her mental and emotional stress was wreaking havoc on her body. She began walking with a cane.

On Diane's first massage therapy visit with me, I questioned her further about her fall from the chair. I concluded that she had also hit her hip and gluteus maximus ("glute") muscles. I figured she probably had trigger points in her lower back, glute and psoas muscles. When I suggested a trigger point massage, Diane said she was ready to try anything.

It was no wonder she was in pain! I found trigger points in her piriformis, glutes, psoas, iliacus crest and quadratus lumborum muscles. After fifty minutes of trigger point therapy, Diane got off the massage table herself. She walked across the room without her cane and without her pain. After her initial elation and amazement, she was mad, "Why didn't my doctor recommend this?" I explained that some doctors do recommend trigger point therapy, and that most major auto insurance companies cover trigger point massage therapy with a doctor's prescription, but sometimes it is necessary for the patient to request the treatment.

Before Diane left, I urged her to drink a lot of water. When you release trigger points you are also releasing toxins into the bloodstream, which accumulate as a result of poor circulation in and around congested muscles. Releasing these toxins into the bloodstream can produce a sickening feeling in the stomach but water flushes it from the system.

Within a month of trigger point treatment Diane was fully recovered from an ailment that the best of academic medicine failed to diagnose. Currently Diane runs five miles a day thanks to trigger point therapy and a skillful practitioner. The pain relief and subsequent stress relief, combined with vitamin and herbal supplements, have helped her stop losing her hair.

### **Inventing Healthy Body Ball®**

While I was attending school at the Desert Institute of the Healing Arts to receive my certification for massage therapy, I took my first class on trigger point therapy. At this time, I had chronic pain in my back, which limited my ability to turn my head and neck. The instructor pushed on a painful knot in my back and I remember saying, "It hurt so good," that when he released his pressure a few seconds later I said, "No, don't stop that pressure." He said "Cheryl, I am applying the same pressure now as when I started; it's your body that "melted" that trigger point away; my pressure never changed." I couldn't believe how good I felt. I realized I had just learned something that was going to define my future. From that point, I was devoted to practicing and learning all I could about trigger point therapy.

When my practice partner moved back to Wisconsin later that year, I had a problem locating another therapist who could locate trigger points and hold them with the pressure required to melt them. Most therapists are not sufficiently educated in this form of treatment. This is in part due to the lack of regulation pertaining to massage education hours in the United States; for instance, Thousand Oaks, California may require 250 hours of training, whereas Tucson, Arizona requires 1000 hours of training. The other problem is that trigger point therapy is hard work physically, requiring a lot of strength and stamina, which, over time, can take its toll on even the strongest and best qualified therapists. I wasn't getting the satisfaction I wanted and I was paying seventy-five dollars an hour to feel this dissatisfaction. That is when I made my first prototype of the Healthy Body Ball®, a hand-molded clay ball with clay replicas of ten of my thumbs protruding from the ball in all directions. A friend tried it and said, "You should patent this ball and let other people experience this relief."

With the help of some outstanding developers, the clay ball turned into a silicone rubber ball, about the size of a tennis ball, with 10 strategically located nubbins protruding from the surface of the ball. The nubbins simulate the pressure and consistency of a massage therapist's thumbs in the application of trigger point massage therapy. When the ball is positioned appropriately, body weight against the nubbins supplies enough pressure to allow the release of pain.

I am quick to say that I am not an inventor by trade, but because I have worked with people who were in such dire pain for years, I was inspired to invent something that could help them between therapy visits. There have been many challenges in getting Healthy Body Ball patented, produced and on the market but by keeping in mind the countless stories of my client's pain, I have stayed motivated and committed to producing an effective self-healing device. Additionally, I know that not everyone can afford weekly massage therapy. And it's not just the money. Going for therapy sessions is a time commitment for people with active schedules. Healthy Body Ball provides an economical alternative that allows people to experience pain relief wherever they are, including home, office, car, even movies and airplanes.

## **Trigger Points**

Trigger points are clustered areas of pain in or around muscles that usually radiate pain in a predictable pattern. When a muscle, or group of muscles, incurs injury, it automatically contracts around the painful site to support and protect the area. If pain is resolved quickly, the muscles can relax. If pain persists, muscles can become habitually contracted. Sometimes contractions press on nerves causing tingling, numbness, and more pain. Like a sponge that is squeezed, a contracted muscle can't hold much blood. Blood transports oxygen and nutrients to the muscles and carries away waste products. When a muscle is deprived of healthy circulation, it doesn't receive enough oxygen and nutrients, and waste products accumulate. This can result in fatigue and soreness. It can also irritate nerves in the area, causing pain to spread beyond the congested area.

### **Finding the Real Source of Pain**

Most trigger points are easy to detect by locating the pain, applying pressure and experiencing the subsequent release, however, in some cases, the real source of pain may be a "boss" trigger point located quite a distance from the "satellite" trigger point (pain site). For example, a boss trigger point for the wrist, forearm and hand is frequently located in the region of the shoulder blade. Thus, pain associated with the wrist, forearm and hand may require treatment of the boss trigger point, not the localized satellite point. The "Healthy Body Ball User's Guide," included with each Healthy Body Ball, contains information on how to locate the appropriate trigger points.

### **The Pain-Spasm-Pain Cycle**

The "pain-spasm-pain" cycle is a complete chain of events, which is reinforced by each event in the cycle. Pain often begins with injury, illness, inadequate stretching before sports or physical activities, or overuse of a muscle. Each event, especially stress, can add to or even start the cycle. The pain cycle involves these major events: pain, which leads to muscle tension and pressure on nerves, causes reduced circulation and muscle shortening. Reduced circulation and muscle shortening results in restricted movement and causes trigger points to form. Trigger points cause more stress and more pain. Any single event in the pain cycle can set off the complex chain of events that ultimately leads back to pain. Treating trigger point pain with the Healthy Body Ball interrupts the pain-spasm-pain cycle without drugs or negative side effects.

### **Origins of Trigger Point Therapy**

Trigger point therapy is one of the largest and fastest growing muscle therapies today. Janet Travell, M.D., the White House physician under former President John F. Kennedy, and Dr. David Simons initially coined the phrase "trigger point therapy" to describe their then cutting edge treatments involving saline injections into muscle, stretches and heat therapy to resolve trouble spots. Travell used these techniques to treat JFK's back pain. In the 1970's Bonnie Prudden advanced Travell and Simons' methods by developing a system of non-invasive techniques, which are widely used today by professional athletes, massage and physical therapists, and prescribed and recommended by medical doctors.

## **Ailments Which Might Benefit From Trigger Point Therapy**

**Therapeutic trigger point therapy may help with a wide range of medical conditions, including:**

- Anxiety and stress
- Arthritis (osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis)
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Chronic and temporary pain
- Circulatory problems
- Depression
- Headache, especially when due to muscle tension
- Insomnia
- Myofascial pain (a condition of the tissue connecting the muscles)
- Reduced range of motion
- Sports injuries, including pulled or strained muscles and sprained ligaments
- Temporomandibular joint dysfunction (TMJ)

The professional opinion of massage therapy as a complementary treatment for pain has grown extensively in the medical community. According to Brad Stuart, M.D., Hospice Medical Director of Hospice of Northern California, "Massage Therapy is of tremendous benefit as a complementary therapy; it is no longer considered alternative."

### **How to use Healthy Body Ball**

**Healthy Body Ball may provide the desired pain and stress relief in just four easy steps:**

1. Locate trigger points or points of pain.
2. Position Healthy Body Ball between afflicted area and a resistant surface.
3. Apply pressure for approximately 15 to 20 seconds.
4. Stretch the muscle and the area that is affected.

An ideal place to use Healthy Body Ball is lying on the floor, bed or couch. The harder the surface,

the deeper the pressure on afflicted areas. There are no limits to the places where the ball may be used. I always bring the ball with me to the movies or anywhere I sit for long periods of time. It is so compact that it's convenient to bring along on a long air flight, bus or train ride.

The great thing about using Healthy Body Ball is that it really encourages me to stop, clear my mind, and take some of those deep breaths that I've been meaning to take. It's a good tool for regaining focus. Trigger points can feel intense when they are releasing and that is the time to breathe deeply and allow relaxation to follow.

## **Physical, Mental and Wellness Benefits**

### **Healthy Body Ball may provide the following benefits:**

- Helps alleviate pain
- Helps stop the pain-spasm-pain cycle
- Helps relieve muscle tension and stiffness
- Helps relieve stress and aids relaxation
- Fosters faster healing
- Reduces muscle spasms
- Provides greater joint flexibility and range of motion
- Enhances athletic performance
- Promotes deeper and easier breathing
- Improves circulation of blood and movement of lymph fluids
- Helps relieve tension related headaches and eye strain
- Enhances the health and nourishment of skin
- Improves posture
- Strengthens the immune system
- Fosters peace of mind
- Reduces levels of anxiety
- Improves ability to monitor stress signals and respond appropriately

When working with Healthy Body Ball, let pain be your friend and your guide. Most people avoid pain, but pain is the body's way of communicating. Pain will guide you to trigger points. The Healthy Body Ball User's Guide has helpful tips for locating trigger point problem areas. Within approximately 20 seconds of applying Healthy Body Ball to the afflicted muscles, the pain should dissipate and, in many cases, be gone entirely. When I use the ball, I feel an increase in relaxation and mental clarity, as well as pain relief. Although the muscle doctor is nowhere to be found, self-massage, taking charge of your pain and healing yourself is. Happy Healing!

**Contact Information:**

Cheryl Zemont-Payne  
Healthy Body Products  
P.O. Box 91335  
Tucson, AZ 85752

**E-mail: [czdocmus@msn.net](mailto:czdocmus@msn.net)**

**(800) 455-4346**

**(520) 579-3244**

**Web site: [www.healthybodyball.com](http://www.healthybodyball.com)**