

8 Ways Myofascial Release Can Help You Recover from Pain



When you stop to think about it, the human body truly is an amazing thing! For instance you have this skeletal structure that holds us all up, and gives the organs and muscles a place to hang their hats and do their jobs. And what a collection of jobs they do! (I find fingers and thumbs particularly impressive! Don't you?)

And the the muscular system, which is what we deal with directly . . . I mean come on! Muscles are amazing! They are responsible for any movement that you make at any time. How's that for importance? When it comes to the body, the muscles really do most of the heavy lifting. (See what I did there?)

But here's the thing . . . they are only able to do this heavy lifting because of the fabulous (should be famous) fibrous fascial tissue! The Fascial SYSTEM.

This system of connective tissue surrounds all of the muscles, and the nerves, the blood vessels, everything! Even the organs! It's all over the place! Basically, your entire body is encased in Fascia from the tips of your hair follicles to the edges of your toenails! And everything in between! This fascial system is incredibly strong, and yet at the same time designed to be flexible and soft. Quite the dichotomy!

At times the fascia can become tight or stiff, and may form what folks call "knots", which we MFR therapists call Fascial Restrictions. These restrictions can have up to 2,000 lbs. per inch of pressure in them! Squeezing the flexibility right out of the body! No wonder you feel pain and tightness!

2,000 lbs! That's what a VW Bug weighted in 1972 for cryin' out loud!! And you wonder why you have pain and stiffness? If you had a VW on your back you'd sure as heck know what it was!

**Here are 8 ways how myofascial release can help you recover
from pain and stiffness.**



1. It Produces the Relaxation Response.

Relaxed is our normal state. It's how we are supposed to feel and the state our body is meant to be in . . . but life happens and that changes. Sometimes that change happens rapidly due to a traumatic event (more life happens to some than to others). And sometimes it's a slow buildup of tension over a long period of time.

When your body feels tense it can be a sign of both mental and physical stress and that stress can be the source of your pain. Sometimes the pain itself causes the stress. When a person is feeling stress or pain, you can bet it's got a lot to do with some of the myofascial restrictions I was telling you about. If these restrictions are not properly released, it becomes worse over time. A little pain here and there one day becomes "help! I can't stand up or can't tie my shoes!"

Having chronic muscle pain, even what some might call minor pain, is not good. In fact, it can be quite debilitating. We get good at "dealing with it", but it wears you down, eventually it catches up with you. One of the ways to help alleviate these issues is through myofascial release (also known as MFR). MFR treatment relieves this stress and tension on deeper levels than traditional massage and some other modalities.

When you release the fascia, it relaxes the *systems* of the body. It eases the pain that you are experiencing, and in fact it does a lot more! Releasing the fascia helps the body

heal on all levels, physical, mental and emotional. It restores the body to it's meant to be relaxed state. With MFR treatment you will feel better both mentally and physically, how cool is THAT!

The answer is *very* cool. Very cool indeed. Read on for more . . .



2. It releases you from Chronic Pain

Let's face it . . . nobody likes to be in pain. People go to great lengths . . . and pay all kinds of money for all kinds of treatments, surgeries, pills and massages . . . and try all sorts of sometimes crazy things. Why? Because it sucks to be in pain!

Many of these treatments provide temporary relief, it even says that on the label of the pills! And some just seem to be a waste of money. And some, like surgery, cause other problems, even if they are "successful" and seem to solve the initial issue. They "fixed" that knee or what have you, but now I have these other problems and pains!

Don't get me wrong, sometimes we **NEED** these things like surgery. But they themselves are a trauma to the systems of the body. And once you're all patched up and things seem ok, the Doc's give you their blessing and send you on your way . . . I'm here to tell you that you are *not* ok . . . they have messed with your fascial system and you will most likely have some "stuff" come up later. And then you'll be wondering why.

Wouldn't you like to have these issues *corrected* so you don't feel the pain and restrictions in the long run? Addressing the fascial system restores your sense of movement and well-being. It relieves the chronic pain. And again, how cool it that!



3. It Restores Flexibility

When it comes to fascial restrictions, they are most likely at the core of your lack of flexibility. When restrictions occur, it can be quite difficult to move in the ways that we want to.

These restrictions also lead to weakness and difficulty in doing daily tasks and the exercise so vital to maintaining our health. How many Yogini's out there feel frustrated that they "just can't seem to get past" a certain point in their practice on in a certain pose?

When we cannot move the way that we want to, it can be quite annoying as it keeps us from living life to the fullness that we are meant to live it. We can't do daily tasks like we used to and before you know it you'll start sayin' things like, "well I guess I'm gettin' older." Thinking that your best days are behind you.

Let me clue you in on something . . . we're ALL getting' older! A five-year-old is getting older! That may mean our dreams of being a star in the NBA are never going to be realized (I'm short, slow and can't shoot so that wasn't gonna happen anyway) But it shouldn't mean we're relegated to the porch rocking chair for the rest of our days!

This is where myofascial release comes in. By releasing the deep tissue myofascial restrictions that have developed, flexibility can be restored! Only when flexibility is restored can pain be relieved in more than a temporary way. And more than that, the body can be returned to a more youthful state . . . and who doesn't want to be returned to a more youthful state? (I personally liked Massachusetts in my youth)



4. It Aids in Recovery on All Levels

Whether it's recovering from a major trauma like a car accident or fall, or the smaller traumas of everyday life, your body goes through a lot. These things accumulate and build up in the fascia. I'm sure you've heard of repetitive motion injuries, right? Well even if you haven't, that's a real thing. And again, traumas are not only physical!

And those nonphysical traumas, both large and small, can lead to fascial restrictions that negatively impact your health and well-being in all the body's systems and on all levels.

Even regular exercise requires recovery time. Sore muscles from working out are repaired and restored quicker and are better prepared for your next workout session. And here's something that really cool! MFR treatment in between workouts can actually help your body become even stronger!

We *all* need to recover sometimes. Whether you need to recover from a major trauma, or a series of what I call micro traumas, MFR is an amazing aid to that much needed recovery!



5. It Promotes Mood Elevation

Not only does myofascial release help to reduce pain, reduce tension, improve your flexibility, and even help you recover faster from your workouts, it also can increase endorphins. (Or if you enjoy the occasional bit of childish word play like I do, endolphins!) Endorphins are released during several types of activities. This includes excitement, pain, during exercise, eating spicy foods, and sex. (And they make us feel good!)

When you are receiving MFR, the releases can be emotional as well as physical. The release of the fascial system affects the nervous system as well as the muscular system. In fact it affects every system in the body!

Most people come for MFR treatment for muscle issues, pain and stiffness and such, yeah, that's mostly what gets noticed in treatment and why most people come, but I'm here to tell you that MFR improves the body on *all* levels. When the body is released on such all-encompassing levels it often produces an immediate endorphin release.

Even when there is not an immediate endolphin experience, receiving MFR treatments elevates your overall mood in ways that can be subtle but are amazingly powerful when experienced over time. MFR is even a powerful part of recovering from an emotionally down time in life. (I'm not a doctor so I cannot say I treat depression . . . but yeah . . . something like that)



6. It Corrects Muscle Imbalances

Another great benefit of myofascial release is that it can help to correct muscle imbalances that you may be experiencing. (I almost guarantee that you have imbalances. Almost all of us over the age of 6 do!)

Here's the huge headline and the big reason why that is . . .

The Fascial System is an ORGAN!

Yep . . . so think about it . . . it's an organ. And this organ surrounds every bone, muscle, tendon, ligament and everything else in your entire body! So when your Fascia is restricted how could that NOT create imbalances in the muscle system? (It's creating imbalances in other systems of the body too, but we feel the muscular system more quickly and directly.

So when we release fascial restrictions, the system begins to return to normal and imbalances naturally become more in line with balance and what is called Homeostasis. Which is defined as

"the tendency of a system, especially the physiological system of higher animals, to maintain internal stability, owing to the coordinated response of its parts to any situation or stimulus that would tend to disturb its normal condition or function."

Blah blah blah . . . all that means is that the body is designed to be in a state of *wellness*. . .

MFR helps restore that state of wellness on all levels . . . and how can that not elevate your mood?



7. It Improves Blood Flow and Overall Circulation

This one might seem to have been already covered by the earlier items on the list, but it's important enough to mention and highlight specifically.

When we release restrictions in the fascial system, it increases the circulation of blood throughout the entire body. Proper blood flow to all areas of the body is obviously very important in your overall well being. Proper treatment of the fascial system allows the release of restrictions down to the cellular level. Increasing blood flow down to the capillaries.

Again, blood flow being essential to the functioning of all the cells of the body, it stands to reason that by increasing blood flow to the cells would improve and increase the health of the body as well as relive pain and stiffness. If you are experiencing pain; myofascial release can go a long way in reducing that pain. Even if you are *not* experiencing pain, MFR will improve your circulation and over all health. Now who doesn't want some of THAT action!



8. It Improves Neuromuscular Efficiency

Another great benefit of myofascial release is that by improving blood circulation, all the systems of the body will be getting more oxygen. In particular, the relationship between the nervous system and the muscular system is aided by this increase in oxygen through the increase of blood flow. Again, this may seem redundant, but it's not really.

When receiving MFR your therapist will often bring your breathing to mind and will often ask you to "take a slow deep breath". Now that we've got the blood flowing, we need to make sure that blood is fully oxygenated, and as you know that comes from the lungs!

You may not be aware of it, but many times people are not breathing fully. . . in fact I'd be willing to bet, don't worry. No money involved. I'm just making a point. We have no way of proving the bet anyway! But if we could, I'd lay odds that most people are not breathing properly or nearly deep enough. And they don't have a clue they are not breathing fully. With MFR folks will be taking fuller, deeper breaths and therefore filling the lungs more fully. This will allow a more efficient exchange of oxygen to the blood . . . and well you get the picture. All of this improves the neuromuscular interactions and efficiency.

Here's the overriding truth . . . all of the systems of the body are connected and all work together. Myofascial Release allows this interconnectedness to be restored to more healthy functioning down to the cellular level and that allows the body to do what it's designed to do . . . and that is to self-correct. To function in homeostasis. Which again is when things are all Hunky Dory, and all systems go . . . As intended. With less pain and more freedom of movement. And who can say they wouldn't want more of that!