

## Specialising in:

- + Neuromuscular Therapy
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### Muscle Memory

Many things we do everyday like riding a bicycle, walking, singing, writing and exercises are learned through muscle memory. Even life events causing emotional/physical trauma can result in a negative form of muscle memory.

“Everything we do and everything that happens to us and around us affects the nervous system, including the brain and the muscles enervated by each experience. Learn how massage therapy can help to release and even assist in healing the imbalance caused by trauma to the body and mind.

The body remembers what the mind forgets is something mind/body therapists say when it comes to both physical or psychological trauma and the body.” As a massage therapist I often see clients who present with muscle pain from injury or chronic muscle tightness. When the client is massaged it elicits memories from the time of injury or stress whether physical or emotional. Tears, laughter and anger are a few feelings that clients experience when the soft tissues are treated.

### What Is Muscle Memory?

“Muscle memory is related to such terms as motor learning, body memory and cellular memory, though each means something slightly different. The basic hypothesis for all of them is that the physical body retains a memory of what the mind experiences and the mind, or brain and nervous system, retain a memory of what the body experiences.”



Remember learning to ride a bike as a child? After a few wobbles and some persistent practice it becomes a natural thing to do. Now, some years down the track and you get back on your bike, you feel rusty but it only takes a short time for the stagnant neurons to be activated, getting you back to the same level of bike riding. This is muscle memory. “If muscle memory did not exist, we would probably have to relearn our basic experiences every day. The physical aspects are the easiest to understand. They are experienced on a daily basis. The muscle memory connected to psychological trauma can seem to some to be a bit more ethereal or even evasive when trying to comprehend the why’s and how’s of it all.”

### The Relationship Between Chronic Pain and Trauma

“Chronic pain is generally defined as prolonged pain lasting longer than usual for natural healing. That is, once the physical wounds have healed or the danger related to emotional trauma has passed. It is said that time heals all wounds. For some people the visible wounds may appear to be healed, but the pain lingers on for months or years. It can be debilitating, interfering with day-to-day activities and lead to depression and anxiety that prohibits functioning in any kind of normal way.”

“The effects of trauma can last a long time, e.g. phantom pain or irritation a person feels after a limb is amputated. A reason sometimes given is that it is due to muscle memory; the pain is felt or perhaps generated by the brain and acts as if the limb still exists, and the trauma is ongoing. Another example would be in the soldier experiencing post traumatic stress after his truck hits a land-mine. For years afterward he may feel the pain of the explosion every time he gets into a car. The reasons are complex and elusive.”

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### The Physiology of Trauma

“A physical trauma – something like a car accident, exposure to toxins, injury from an explosion, a physical assault – creates a reaction between the mind and body involving the autonomic (sympathetic and parasympathetic subdivisions) nervous system. It is that flight, fight or freeze response of the sympathetic portion reacting to an often life-threatening situation. Cortisol and norepinephrine are released and, along with other stress related hormones, affect the digestive process, heart rate, blood pressure, breathing as well as other body functions. These hormones act by rallying up stored energy to invigorate and mobilize muscles. An increase in these hormones long term can also negatively affect reproduction and the immune system.”

“In the brain, the amygdalae along with associated neural networks (part of the limbic system) generate a state of hyper-vigilance that can last well beyond the actual event causing the original trauma. The amygdalae, which also stimulate the hippocampus with regard to long-term memories, are responsible for memories associated with emotional events. If the trauma, whether physical or emotional (or both) is not addressed early on, the result can be Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as well as chronic pain. This chronic pain can be in areas associated with the original trauma or located throughout the body.”

**“Long after the trauma, deep within the brain, the subconscious mind remembers. Within the limbic system lies the memories associated with the event or injury. The smells, the sounds, the tastes, the textures, the visuals – all the senses are stimulated during a trauma and stored to form a kind of emotional picture within the brain.”**

### Can Massage Really Help?

“Massage and other forms of bodywork can be of great benefit when it comes to retraining the brain and muscles to become rebalanced and reactive in healthy, pain-free ways. With regard to emotional trauma, bodywork along with various methods of psychological talk-therapy can be very helpful.

Massage therapy can bring a professional answer to those who fear touch because of chronic pain or emotional trauma (especially as a result of child abuse, sexual assault or combat related injuries). Shiatsu techniques or even non-touching therapies such as Reiki or Kinesiology can be very helpful. As the person becomes more attuned to his or her body, modalities such as Trigger Point Massage, Rolfing and Feldenkrais Movement Re-education can be used as well.

**Retraining the body is not something done quickly; it takes time to create new connections and for the brain to remember original pre-trauma neuronal pathways. For the massage therapist this type of work can be very rewarding as improvement and progress is eventually seen in the client’s posture, movement, flexibility and emotional behaviour.”**

<http://www.integrativehealthcare.org/mt/archives/2013/08/muscle-memory-trauma-and-massage-therapy.html>

## Asian Vegetable Broth



### Ingredients

- 3 cloves of garlic
- 5cm piece of ginger
- 200 g mixed Asian greens, such as baby pak choi, choy sum, Chinese cabbage
- 2 spring onions
- 1 fresh red chilli
- 5 sprigs of fresh Thai basil
- 1 stick of lemongrass
- 2 star anise
- 800 ml clear organic vegetable stock
- 1 teaspoon fish sauce, (optional)
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1 small punnet shiso cress
- 1 lime

### Method

1. Peel and crush the garlic, then peel and roughly chop the ginger. Trim the greens, finely shredding the cabbage, if using. Trim and finely slice the spring onions and chilli. Pick the herbs.

2. Bash the lemongrass on a chopping board with a rolling pin until it breaks open, then add to a large saucepan along with the garlic, ginger and star anise.

3. Place the pan over a high heat, then pour in the vegetable stock. Bring it just to the boil, then turn down very low and gently simmer for 30 minutes.

4. A couple of minutes before it's cooked, throw in your Asian veggies and gently cook until they are wilted but still crunchy.

5. Serve the broth in deep bowls seasoned with fish sauce (if using) and soy sauce, sprinkle with the herbs, cress, spring onion and chilli, then serve with wedges of lime.

<http://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/vegetables-recipes/asian-vegetable-broth/>

## Gait -

the manner or style of walking.

Gait analysis evaluation of the manner or style of walking, usually done by observing the individual walking naturally in a straight line.

The normal forward step consists of two phases: the *stance phase*, during which one leg and foot are bearing most or all of the body weight, and the *swing phase*, during which the foot is not touching the walking surface and the body weight is borne by the other leg and foot.

In the complete step cycle both feet are in contact with the floor at the same time for about 25 % of the time

This part of the cycle is called the *double-support phase*.

An analysis of each component of the three phases of ambulation is an essential part of the diagnosis of various neurologic disorders and the assessment of patient progress during rehabilitation and recovery from the effects of a neurologic disease, a musculoskeletal injury or disease process, or amputation of a lower limb.

### Waddling Gait (Duck like Walking)

Rolling gait in which the weight-bearing hip is not stabilized; it bulges outward with each step, while the opposite side of the pelvis drops, resulting in alternating lateral trunk movements; due to gluteus medius muscle weakness seen in muscular dystrophies and other disorders.

### Festinating Gait -

one in which the patient involuntarily moves with short, accelerating steps, often on tiptoe, with the trunk flexed forward and the legs flexed stiffly at the hips and knees. It is seen in **parkinson's disease** and other neurologic conditions that affect the **basal ganglia**. Also called Festination

### Oppenheim's gait -

a gait marked by irregular oscillation of the head, limbs, and body; seen in some cases of **multiple sclerosis**.

### Charlie Chaplin Gait

A gait seen in bilateral external torsion of tibia, caused by faulty sitting or sleeping, as in prolonged maintenance of 'spread-eagle' or frogleg position.

Management, early Change sleep position, brace Management, Clinical Massage or later Osteotomy.



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