Improving Thoracic Mobility

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Course Description
A lack of thoracic mobility can have broad clinical implications and evidence suggests addressing mobility in this region may be beneficial for those with shoulder, neck and lower back pain. However, this region can be challenging to treat. Enhancing mobility can be difficulty due to the intimate architecture of the anatomy. Also, improving mobility for patients can require awkward positions that may be challenging to assume. This course will discuss the anatomy and basic mechanics of the thoracic region and review current evidence for interventions targeting this region. Finally, practical manual therapy and self-mobilization concepts will be covered so the participant can take this information and apply it in practical way. Upon conclusion of this webinar the attendee will have a better understanding of how thoracic mobility can have a broad influence on many different patient cases and new ideas on how to address it clinically.

Objectives
• Identify three primary causes for decreased thoracic mobility
• Identify four conditions associated with a lack of thoracic mobility
• Describe 3 manual therapy techniques to address poor thoracic mobility
• Describe 4 self-mobilization techniques to promote patient self-care to improve thoracic mobility
Course Outline

- Anatomy and basic mechanics
- Associated impairments and conditions
- Treatment approaches to improve thoracic mobility
- Manual therapy techniques to improve thoracic mobility
- Self-mobilization techniques to improve thoracic mobility

Why improve thoracic mobility?

- Societal postures
- Aging
- Regional Interdependence

Poor Posture

- Increasing challenges with functional transitions
Neck Pain

- Biomechanical considerations
- Postural implications
- Direct associations have been found with thoracic mobility and neck pain (Norlander et al. 1997)

Shoulder Pain

- Posture and scapular position
- Reduced subacromial space (Shaw et al. 1994)
- Limited functional upper extremity movements

Low Back Pain

- Associated kypholordotic posture
- Accentuated mobility in the lumbar spine and SI
Upper quarter functioning

The Thoracic Spine

Thoracic Vertebrae
Upper cross syndrome

Treatment Approaches

Manual therapy
Self Stretching
Posture

Questions??
Posture

1. Roll pelvis forward
2. Lift sternum bone
3. Retract and relax neck

Manual Therapy Techniques

Clavicular Clearing
Inhibitive Distraction

Subcranial Soft Tissue Mobilization

Scalene Soft Tissue Mobilization
Pec Minor Stretch

STM Pec Minor

Self Mobilization Techniques
Latissimus Self Stretch

Upper Trap Self Stretch

Pec Minor Self Stretch
Cat & Camel Exercise

Upper Trunk Rotation through thoracic spine

Lower Trunk Rotation through thoracic spine
Bringing it together

• Consider individual daily activities
• An eclectic approach

Conclusion

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References