

# **Advanced Physiotherapeutic**

## **Musculoskeletal System**

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### **CYRIAX SYSTEM OF ORTHOPAEDIC MEDICINE**

Orthopedic Medicine is the diagnosis and non-operative treatment of soft tissue lesions around the body. The scope of treatment includes lesions of ligaments, tendons, bursa and muscles along with lesions of the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spines.

The late Dr. James Cyriax, an Internist and Orthopaedic Surgeon in England, developed his system of Orthopaedic Medicine over an extended period starting in the early 1920's. As a young doctor he observed that his teachers could not delineate how they arrived at a musculoskeletal diagnosis nor specify what the problems were.

He proceeded to develop a series of simple objective clinical exams that would effectively diagnose soft tissue musculoskeletal lesions. His collected results, after many years of trial and error, coalesced into a set of systematic simple clinical exams for each joint and a treatment system for the soft tissue lesions around each joint.

He coined the term 'Orthopaedic Medicine'. The basic principles of Orthopaedic Medicine are: 1) Every pain has a source. 2) Treatment must reach the source. 3) Treatment must benefit the source in order to relieve the pain. Most sources of pain in the musculoskeletal system can be localized to a specific tissue. We look carefully in a systematic manner to isolate the cause of pain, and then treat it specifically. A specific diagnosis leads to successful treatment.

The examination uses carefully chosen movements. We use active and resisted movement testing to evaluate tendons and muscles. We utilize passive movement testing to assess ligaments for pain, laxity or limitation in range of motion. A distinctive feature of the Cyriax method is the capsular pattern. This capsular pattern denotes inflammation of the capsule such as in an inflammatory or traumatic arthritis, a fracture or a cancer which extends close to or into that joint. It is associated with a specific pattern of limitation with the various passive movements at the joint. Each joint has its own distinctive capsular pattern. A non-capsular pattern implies that the capsule is not involved and that intra- or extra-articular tissue is inflamed or injured and the source of pain. Either pattern will be consistent on repeated exam from one day to the next.

The Cyriax method of Orthopaedic Medicine is an exercise of Applied or Functional Anatomy in which assessment of body movements indicates where lesions lie. Treatment of these lesions incorporate various distinctive techniques of manipulation, injections or physical therapy.

Orthopaedic Medicine is a very intellectually satisfying and challenging discipline because the most frequently used tools of diagnosis are those of the history and clinical

exam. We establish a diagnosis by our own eyes, ears and hands. The lesions we see are small, without visible or palpable lumps or bumps. MRI scans or other high-technology tests occasionally do not demonstrate the lesions that we elucidate by history and clinical evaluation.

**For more notes**

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