

As I'm writing this newsletter Sarasota is on the outside band of hurricane Idalia. It looks like it's heading further north before it makes landfall, so the worst we should expect is lots of rain and some wind but not at hurricane force. Fingers crossed!

I was speaking to my friend Betty Norlin who gave me the idea for this month's newsletter. She was at a convention where she met a chiropractor named Dr. Sherry McAllister from San Jose, CA. Dr. Sherry was at the convention to kick off Drug Free Pain Management month. What a fantastic plan! She and I will be meeting so we can see how we can work together to help people move away from the drugs that are so addictive and can destroy lives.

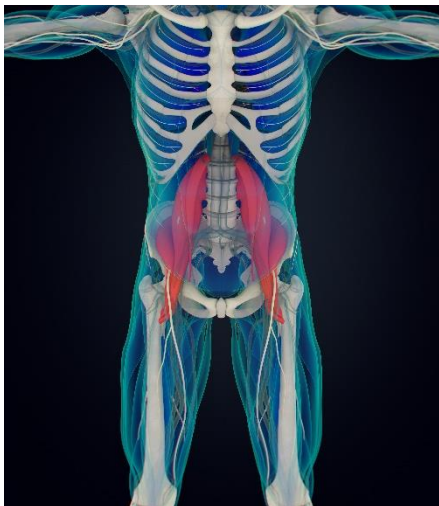
I decided to do a deep-dive into drug free ways to ease, or eliminate, pain.

Drug Free Treatments for Pain Relief

Muscles

Of course, my first suggestion is to check out how tight muscles may be the cause of pain. Because it's a perfect example of how muscles cause pain, I use the analogy of pulling your hair and your scalp hurts, and you can't move your head in the opposite direction.

Since so many people suffer from low back pain, I'm going to use this as the area of pain we'll be addressing during this explanation.



The long muscle that is right next to the lumbar spine is called the "psoas." This is the muscle I'll be discussing here.

The muscle that is further down on the graphic, and is along the inside of the pelvis, is called the "iliacus." We won't look at this one as it will complicate matters.

When you are looking at the psoas muscle in this graphic it is being shown at its longest length, going from the lumbar vertebrae to the top of your thigh bone (the femur).

When this muscle contracts (shortens) it pulls up on your thigh bone and you lift up your leg to take a step or sit down.

There is a phenomenon called "muscle memory" that says when a muscle is held in a contracted position for a period of time, it actually shortens to that length. So, if you are sitting for a length of time, such as at your desk, the muscle has shortened, and when you try to stand up it's just not long enough to stretch so you can stand up straight. The same thing happens if you

sleep on your side with your knees bent, which is just sitting horizontally. That's the reason people have low back pain when they get up in the morning.

The now-shorter muscle is putting a strain on your lumbar vertebrae, and you feel it as low back pain. The problem is you rub your low back but that's not where the strain is coming from, it's coming from the FRONT side of your lumbar vertebrae, not the back side of your lumbar.

You try to stretch, but that doesn't help because the muscle is tied up in knots (not literally, but that's what I call spasms because it's easier to visualize). It's like tying a 12" length of rope so it becomes 10" and then trying to stretch it back to 12" without untying the knots.

I've discussed this problem in the past, so I won't go into it here. I just wanted to point out that a muscle can put a strain on your bone and prevent you from moving easily and can cause a great deal of pain.

Tight muscles will pull on their insertion points all over the body, so they are a major cause of joint pain.

I strongly suggest that if you have joint pain and can't easily move the joint, look at tight muscles first, you may be happily surprised at the quick results.

If you don't live in Sarasota, we can do a Zoom Consultation! They are easy to do and they work so well. Just click here: <https://julstromethod.com/product/private-consultation/>

Chiropractic

As I said above, muscles merge into tendons and the tendons cross over a joint before they insert into another bone. When the muscle contracts it pulls on the tendon, and the joint moves. That's the way we walk, throw a ball, nod our head, or smile.

In fact, muscles pulling on a bone is the cause of all the movements we make every moment of our lives.

A problem arises when the muscles that originate, or insert, into the bones of your back (vertebrae) get tight and pull the bones out of alignment. This will have the bone press down on nerves &/or discs and you will have terrible pain.

Of course, you can have some type of accident that pushes the vertebrae out of alignment and causes pressure on the nerves and discs. Plus, a trauma like this will also cause the muscles to shorten as the vertebrae is moved, which then holds the bones out of alignment.

In any case, a chiropractor is skilled at properly turning the vertebrae so s/he can guide it back where it belongs. This stops the strain on the bone, nerves and discs, and the pain disappears.

If the muscle is still tight it will pull the bone back out again. I'm not a chiropractor, I can't safely move bones. But muscular therapy and chiropractic are like peanut butter and jelly, we complement each other perfectly. This is why I always recommend to my clients that they see me first to release the tension in the muscle, and then immediately see the chiropractor to have the bones realigned.

Acupuncture

My feeling about acupuncture is that anything that has been successfully used for over 5,000 years must have value! Here in the West, we aren't taught about the energy that flows through the body that is called "Chi."

An acupuncturist is trained to know the symptoms the body displays when the Chi is blocked, and what points to needle to release the blockage. While I don't understand it completely, I did have an amazing experience with acupuncture that I want to share.

In 1993, after living in Hawaii for three years, I moved to Philadelphia. Soon after I arrived, I started having a strange rash form on my eyelids. I went to a doctor who sent me to a dermatologist. I was given pills and creams, but they didn't do anything at all to help the problem. The rash started to spread and in short-order it covered my entire face with pustules and dry, white scales that bled if I yawned, sneezed, or laughed. It was horrid!

I went to every medical professional I could think of, and nothing worked. Finally, I went to a acupuncturist who did muscle testing to find out the problem, which turned out to be pollution! Hawaii is pollution-free because of the trade winds, so my body was reacting to the chemicals. She then treated me with specific acupuncture points. The turnaround was immediate, although it took three treatments and as many weeks for it to be gone 100%, without drugs.

I've since used acupuncture for a laundry-list of systemic conditions, and I frequently refer my clients to an acupuncturist. My acupuncturist here in Sarasota is also a Traditional Medicine Physician so I'm given capsules that seem to be miraculous. If that's of interest to you, let me know and I'll introduce you to Dr. Hu.

Meditation, Hypnosis, Relaxation Techniques, Exercise

There are so many ways to change the mind and our focus on pain that I would need to write a book to cover all of them. The brain is more powerful than we suspect, and we don't give it the credit it is due.

I've used biofeedback successfully, and hypnosis in the past, and I highly recommend it to anyone who is under stress. Stress can cause your pain, and it will be ignored by many professionals. There are many books that deal with the problem, including: *The Brain and Pain* by Richard Ambron; *Change Your Brain, Change Your Pain* by Mark Grant; and *The Pain Relief Secret* by Sarah Warren.

If this is something that is interesting, you can go on www.perplexity.ai and put in a question such as "books on meditation," or "books on relaxation techniques," etc., you'll get a long list that you can explore. It's worth the time and energy to see how to re-focus your brain when you are experiencing pain, especially chronic pain.

And so much more!

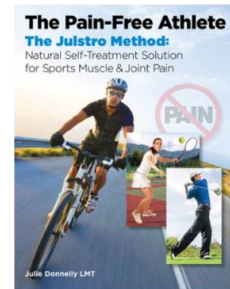
In honor of Drug Free Pain Management month, I am happy to have shared this little touch on the many ways pain can be addressed without the use of life-altering drugs.

Also, I hope you will watch my TED Talk:

[Julie Donnelly: The Pain Question No One is Asking! | TED Talk](#)

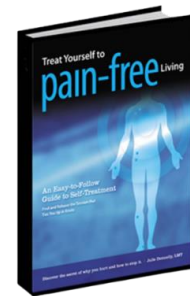
Plus, you can discover how to easily find the source of your muscle/joint pain, and how to do simple self-treatments by using any of my books:

The Pain-Free Athlete (<https://julstromethod.com/product/pain-free-athlete-book/>)



The 15 Minute Back Pain Solution (<https://julstromethod.com/product/15-minute-back-pain-solution-book/>)

Treat Yourself to Pain-Free Living (<https://julstromethod.com/product/pain-free-living-book/>)



And if you have **hand/wrist pain or carpal tunnel syndrome** symptoms:

<https://julstromethod.com/product/julstro-system-for-hand-wrist-pain-and-numbness-dv/>

Wishing you well,

Julie