



Honsberger Health

A quarterly newsletter June 2010



Jason Varghese CAT(C) serves as the Director of our Ergonomics and Industrial Management program. He is a graduate from York University, and is a Certified Athletic Therapist and Kinesiologist. Presently, he is an Assistant Athletic Therapist for the Canadian National Men's Indoor Field Hockey team. In addition to utilizing advanced muscle therapy and manual techniques, Jason also has an extensive background in both Cardiac, Aquatic and Visceral rehabilitation.

Are you Breathing Correctly?

Have you ever paid attention to how you breathe? Most of us just take breathing for granted, but we must understand that breathing is a vital function for our survival in that it serves as a powerful tool with which we can regulate and stimulate our own good health.

In saying this, many of us are not breathing properly or are even aware of our breathing habits. Our breathing can be affected throughout life because of several factors including environmental issues, biomechanical and/or structural misalignments, mental stresses, physical ailments, trauma, etc. All of these factors can lead to increased tension around the abdomen, ribs, chest and back, which restricts the diaphragm and leads us to become inefficient "chest breathers", when we really need to be efficient "diaphragm breathers". If you get a chance, take a look at how a baby breathes – you will see their belly rise and fall as they breathe in and out – this is the best example of proper diaphragmatic breathing.

Many people don't realize that the diaphragm is the principle muscle in breathing. With normal diaphragm breathing, the diaphragm contracts and relaxes, allowing for air to be exchanged in and out of the lungs. If the diaphragm is moving freely, then we get efficient abdominal and lower rib cage movement. If the diaphragm is restricted, then our breathing becomes shallow

Meet the Team

Honsberger Physiotherapy is pleased to announce the addition of Lada Ellis.



Lada is a physiotherapist and will be available full time at our Aurora location. She is also available for medical acupuncture!

and inefficient, and we do not get a proper intake of oxygen in our body.

In addition, diaphragm restrictions can be an underlying influence towards many problems we may experience in life, including:

- low back, mid back or neck pain and/or stiffness
- digestive issues such as IBS, acid reflux, hiatal hernias, stomach cramps, etc.
- respiratory concerns such as asthma, chronic bronchitis, etc.
- increased neurological stress and hypertension
- increased muscular fatigue
- decrease in overall endurance and energy levels

Although many people may feel that they have little sensory awareness of their breathing, diaphragm breathing can be achieved with practice, and there are several ways to exercise this including yoga training. The first step though, is to identify if your breathing mechanics are correct – ask your doctor or therapist for an assessment.

Upcoming Events

We will be at the following events in York Region:

York Central Hospital Foundation
Proud Partners Golf Classic
June 7th at Summit Golf and Country Club

Canadian Cancer Society
Relay for Life
June 11th -12th at Magna International
Look for our booth from 10pm to 4 am!

Honsberger Physiotherapy and Biomechanics Clinic

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www.honsbergerphysio.com



Brent Andrews is a certified athletic trainer / therapist. Prior to joining Honsberger Physiotherapy he spent 11 years with the Toronto Blue Jays as an athletic trainer. He is a certified coach in baseball and alpine skiing among others, and directs our Sports Sciences Division.

Performance in Baseball and Softball

Performance is the ultimate goal in all sports, including baseball and softball. Whether you are a professional or elite athlete, a rep or house-league player or a weekend warrior, everyone wants to perform well.

While age old concepts such as “perfect practice makes perfect”, “sport-specific conditioning” and “mental preparedness” are very important components of performance, one area is consistently omitted from the preparation of athletes at all levels; **biomechanical balance**. All the practice and training in the world will not allow you to perform at your ultimate level if your body is not balanced biomechanically.

Biomechanical Principles

A simple definition of biomechanics is, ‘the mechanics of the living body’. There are several key biomechanical principles that must be addressed before conditioning can be ultimately effective, your best sport performance can be attained and optimal health can be maintained.

In order to demonstrate the first of these key biomechanical principles lets draw a parallel between a house and your body. The strength of a house is only as good as the foundation underneath it. Build on a poor foundation and no matter what you do above, the house will eventually fall apart. The biomechanical foundation of your body is your feet and similarly to the house analogy no matter what you do above (eg conditioning, practice etc) you can never attain your ultimate performance if your feet don’t properly support your body and allow you to efficiently transfer energy from the ground (ground reaction force) to your body above. In other words, you will not be able to produce optimal power in any sport, including baseball and softball.

Moving up the body, the next key area is the pelvis. Malalignment of the pelvis is a very common problem with baseball and softball players. Without proper alignment in this critical area, proper hip rotation essential in hitting and throwing, is not possible. The

hips may be literally blocked from full rotation and/or decreased speed of hip rotation will dramatically and negatively effect performance.

Biomechanically speaking, the last critical region is the upper spine and shoulder. Lack of essential spinal mobility (t-spine) and shoulder stability (scapula), will set up a ball player for a myriad of upper back, neck and arm problems. Arm injuries related to biomechanical faults include instability, shoulder impingement, ‘sick’ scapula, rotator cuff tendonitis, rotator cuff and labral tears and elbow ligament injuries (ie Tommy John surgery).

The best way to avoid biomechanically induced injuries is to be tested. Honsberger Physiotherapy and Biomechanics Clinic specializes in identification of biomechanical faults before injuries occur. After identification, we re-align the body, followed by specific flexibility and strengthening exercises to rebalance the body. Once the body is properly biomechanically balanced, then all conditioning efforts are enhanced, injuries are eliminated or markedly reduced and performance is maximized.

Balance is always regarded as the foundation of sporting activities. Just remember, you can’t be balanced in your sport unless your body is balanced.

Play ball!

Community News

Thanks to all those who participated in this year’s Aurora Home Show.

Congratulations Christine Barber!
Winner of our posture arch and spikey ball package.

A warm welcome to all who signed up for our website newsletter!

We are also pleased to announce Sandra Manherz and Christina Cellucci are expecting new additions to their own families, and will be taking maternity leave starting this summer.

Meet the Team

Honsberger Physiotherapy is also pleased to welcome Justeen Clark to our team.



Justeen is an exercise therapist and personal trainer who has joined our Markham clinic.

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