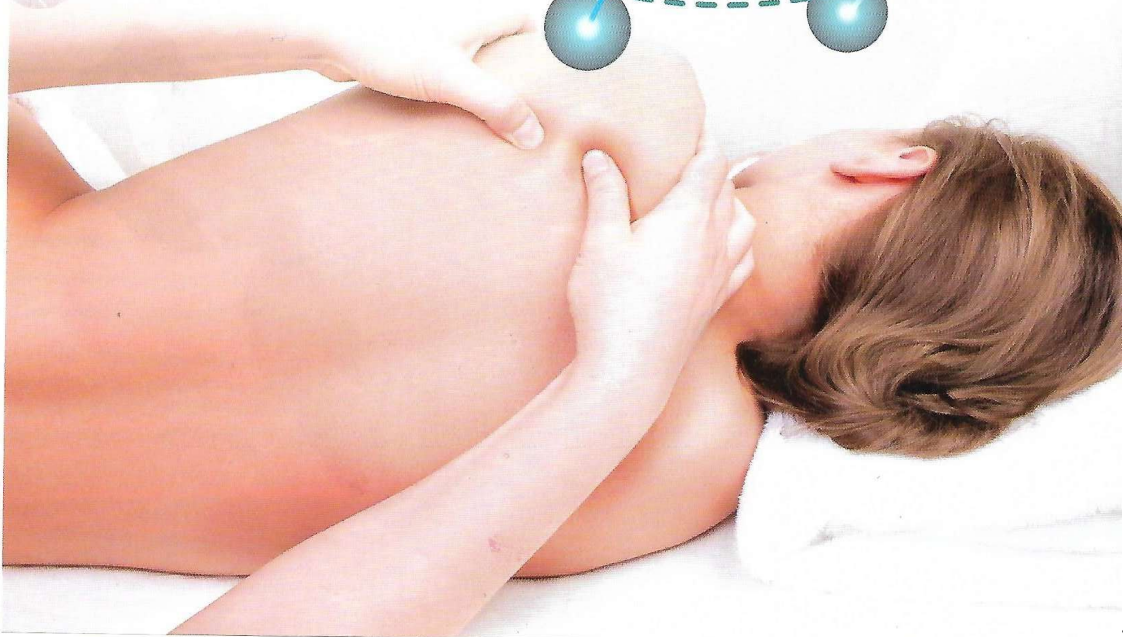



# NEUROSOMA

## – a quantum leap in treating muscle pain



Most of us experience muscle spasm, whether mild or debilitating, at some stage of our lives. For a few of us these symptoms disappear (or we think they do), while others become so accustomed to the ache and discomfort that they forget what it feels like to get up in the morning with the freedom of painless mobility.

 The muscles make up at least half of the body's weight, have an extensive impact on the nervous and circulatory systems, and affect every other function of the body. So it's almost inconceivable that there are no doctors in modern medicine who specialise in muscular problems. The closest we come to 'muscle doctors' is when neurologists or orthopaedic surgeons, for example, treat conditions that affect the muscles.

Those of us who suffer from muscular disorders therefore only have access to certain traditional modalities to help alleviate our symptoms. A few find relief after one visit or a series of treatments, but generally these modalities treat the symptoms and not the cause of the muscle pain. Almost invariably, the pain returns and the cycle continues.

### A NEW MUSCLE THERAPY

With the introduction of Neurosoma in South Africa, people with muscle problems now have access to an advanced therapy that treats the cause and not just the symptoms. Moreover, because the muscles impact on the system as a whole, Neurosoma is also able to treat seemingly unrelated conditions caused by muscle dysfunction. These include respiratory ailments (such as sinus and asthma), skin problems, immune disorders, lower back pain, migraines, and a number of disorders of the organs of hearing (for exam-

ple, vertigo and tinnitus). Neurosoma is the brainchild of Thomas Griner, who has been developing, practising and refining this modality for 40 years.

The word neurosoma comes from the Greek words *neuro*, meaning nerve, and *soma*, meaning body. It aptly describes the role of the Neurosoma muscle therapist, who uses a precise, rapid fingertip technique that targets feedback nerves embedded in skeletal muscle, while ensuring that the stretch reflex mechanism does not activate. It is this approach that differentiates it from other massage modalities.

### MUSCLE AND NERVE INTERACTION

To understand how Neurosoma reverses the causes of muscular pain, we need some knowledge of muscle and nerve function. The body needs a certain amount of muscle tone just to resist gravity. Under normal circumstances, nerve endings on the muscle cells constantly send impulses to the brain about the condition of the cells. The brain responds according to this information, ensuring that the muscle cells are perfectly 'toned' for the action or relaxation that's needed. Energy for muscle function comes from aerobic or anaerobic cellular respiration, the process by which the chemical energy of food molecules is released. Anaerobic respiration (without oxygen) produces pyruvic



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acid, which accumulates if the muscles are in spasm. Lactic acid then forms to protect the cells from possible damage from the pyruvic acid.

This cycle causes problems when muscles that are over-contracted and unable to relax (hypertonic) inhibit blood flow, and the lactic acid can't be flushed out. It floods the nerve end-organs on the muscle cells, corrupting the signals the nerves send to the brain. The brain isn't satisfied when it receives a soft or distorted signal from the muscle – it wants a stronger signal. So it uses the motor nerves to tell the muscle to increase the contraction, the muscle tightens even more, blood flow is increasingly inhibited, and messages about the condition of the muscle cells become further distorted.

Time and certain treatments can appear to cure debilitating muscular conditions. However, when the body is in pain it releases endorphins, its natural painkillers. As the severity of the condition increases, so does the amount of endorphins released, until eventually we assume that the lack of pain means that all is well again. In reality, however, the body's protective reflex has implemented a pain avoidance strategy; muscle spasm has increased as a result of continuing feedback distortion, and the muscles have become weaker.

#### HOW NEUROSOMA TREATS MUSCLE PAIN

Neurosoma therapy cleans up this distorted feedback loop and allows the muscles to return to optimal functioning. Offering a viable alternative to surgery, Neurosoma focuses on waking the body up, getting to the heart of the problem rather than just relieving pain. Simply put, it encourages the body to heal itself.

Neurosoma myotherapists undergo extensive studies in physiology, especially in muscle function and malfunction involving the

nervous system, and are only allowed to practise after completing four qualification levels. Their comprehensive theoretical and practical training gives them the skill and knowledge to identify the root cause of the pain – something that's not always as simple as it seems, especially when referred pain is involved. Treatment starts with an in-depth assessment, looking at the patient's history and current situation. Once the myotherapist has all the pertinent information, the patient relaxes on a treatment bed or chair, depending on the nature of the condition or injury. The myotherapist then uses a Biopulser precision percussor, an impact device developed by Thomas Griner that delivers a consistent and precise pulse or tapping at a specific speed and force, to flush the lactic acid out of the muscle.

Once the Biopulser has done its job, the myotherapist uses a gentle but extremely powerful fingertip massage technique to target feedback nerves on and within muscle cells. Accurate transfer of information to the brain can now take place, and the muscles can contract and relax appropriately. Blood flow increases and the patterns of spasm and pain are re-set. Healing time depends on the severity and duration of the condition and how fast the client's nervous system is. An 84-year-old man with a recent injury can experience complete relief in two sessions, while a 14-year-boy with an old injury may take eight treatments to even start improving.

Neurosoma provides a valuable solution to the sometimes incapacitating impact of muscular spasm on neural flow, and has been used with great success in the USA. If you are interested in finding out more about it, visit [www.neurosoma-southafrica.co.za](http://www.neurosoma-southafrica.co.za) or contact Natasha Rightford on 082-303 3150 or Minette Minaar on 072-638 1580. They are the only two qualified Neurosoma myotherapists in South Africa, and are both based in Cape Town. ●