

Graston Technique is an Effective Treatment for Low Back Pain

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The most common reason for decreased function and impairment is low back pain (LBP). According to National Institutes of Health epidemiology research, lower back pain affects 60-80% of adults at some point in their lifespan.¹ There is a wide range of methods used to treat chronic low back pain (CLBP), and one of them is the "Graston Technique (GT)" or "Instrument-assisted soft tissue mobilization (IASTM)." It is an innovative, proof-based type of instrument-helped delicate tissue activation. GT is a manual therapy that uses specialized instruments with bevelled edges to find and treat soft tissue disorders. GT has slowly started to dominate, using direct compressive stroke techniques to manipulate muscles, myofascial, tendons, and skin. The ground of GT that "James Cryriax " developed is deep cross-friction massage. Although GT or IASTM originates from Gua sha, a traditional Chinese medicine approach, their rationale, objectives, and application strategies differ. This strategy is the best quality level of myofascial discharge.² Despite its indications and limitations, the GT has gained popularity due to its efficiency and effectiveness while remaining completely noninvasive.

Graston Method involves applying pressure and manipulation to the affected areas with specialized tools for incrementing blood supply and breakage of scar tissue.³ In addition, these changes demonstrate that this method can improve the restoration of nearby morphological microvasculature; hence injured soft tissue blood supply increases. Studies indicate the clinical interest of this method in the treatment-related restoration of pain perception, strength, and joint ranges. The instrument's surface maximizes the force delivered to the tissues while minimizing the energy and force the

practitioner uses and therefore, it is possible to stimulate the points adhered in deep areas. The technique assists in changing soft tissue injury to sound working tissue.⁴

The GT is especially beneficial for patients suffering from CLBP. Physical therapists, chiropractors, and sports medicine professionals frequently employ this method to treat LBP, as it mobilizes scar tissue and myofascial adhesions. Increased vibration sensitivity may aid the clinician's capacity to detect tissue adhesions. Furthermore, the instrument's use provides a mechanical advantage, reducing the imposed strain on the therapist's hand.² The GT helps with better healing by using the method of vasodilation. It also aids in the better flexibility of the back muscles. When utilized alongside stretching exercises, the approach helps alleviate pain and discomfort, increase muscular flexibility, and increase range of motion (ROM) after a few weeks of treatment.³

GT is a safe and effective way to treat soft tissue areas affected by chronic low back pain. More research studies have confirmed GT's efficacy. The treatment may vary, but all follow Graston's method, proving with evidence-based practice that physiotherapists should use the Graston technique in their practice. Combined with other physical exercises, it creates a practical treatment approach for CLBP.

Conflict of Interest: None declared.

References

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