

Golfing with FMT

Dr Steven Kofsky

For many golfers a round of golf is often ruined by back, shoulder or elbow pain. This reflects how our bodies work as a system to produce our golf swing.

In addition to strength, the golf swing requires range of motion of the joints, flexibility of the muscles, balance and the ability to smoothly shift weight from one foot to the other. A deficit in any of these components can affect the quality of the swing. For example, lack of range of motion in the hip of the leading leg will result in that hip's impaired ability to decelerate

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the body's momentum on the follow through. Some other part of the body will have to compensate for this loss of motion in the hip, most likely the back.

An aging athlete has the benefit of experience and practice, but also a higher risk of inefficiency and even injury. Something as minor as turning your ankle while walking can have an effect on the efficiency of the swing, all the way up to the shoulder and elbow. Over time and with age, small injuries can start to have a cumulative and larger effect on the rest of the body and the swing. Recreational golfers need to take care of themselves by addressing even the small injuries and doing some minimal training. This training should include the five components of strength, range of motion, flexibility, balance and weight shift. Each component



should be trained individually and in combination on days when they are not playing golf and the completion of a thorough warm up prior to a round of golf.

Interestingly, as a percentage of total power, professional golfers use their large back muscles less than amateurs. Professionals also demonstrate less side bending and shear forces through the lower back. This is a large part of the reason why professionals have a longer swing and improved distance and accuracy of shots.

In addition to helping one recover from injury, the Functional Manual Therapist can assist the professional and amateur golfer in the analysis of the golf swing for efficient motion. The Functional Manual Therapist is not looking to change the technique of the swing, but to enhance the body's ability to complete the swing efficiently. This comes through an analysis of the golf swing and looking for where the body may be lacking in strength, range of motion, flexibility, balance and weight shift.

Once the areas of interest, such as the back or shoulder, are recognized for a particular individual, a more thorough analysis of that body segment will take place in the FMT paradigm of Mechanical, Neuromuscular and Motor Control. In the Mechanical assessment of an area, FMT looks at the body's physical ability to complete a motion through the muscles and joints. Neuromuscular training focuses on the body's ability to have initiation, strength and endurance of muscles or muscle groups. Motor control integrates movement at each body segment to form an efficient whole body motion.

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is a Certified Functional Manual Therapist at VARDAN, a wellness initiative by The Times Group in association with the Institute of Physical Art, USA

Functional Manual Therapy™ (FMT) is a comprehensive approach to physiotherapy, which identifies and facilitates your existing potential through an in-depth examination and treatment of your mechanical capacity, neuromuscular function and motor control. Discover your potential to have less pain and function better with FMT!

To schedule your appointment at the VARDAN Centre (New Delhi):
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