



Facet Syndrome

Between each vertebrae in the spine there are articulations (points of contact) called facet joints. Trauma, degeneration or postural positions may irritate these joints, resulting in neck or back pain. Signs and symptoms include tenderness to touch, pain, and stiffness in the area.

Treatment goals include decreasing the stiffness and pain through the use of modalities such as acupuncture, ultrasound, and Interferential current (IFC). Manual therapy may be included to return proper movement to the area. Corrections of body movements (ex. posture), strengthening and stretching are all integral components of the therapy.

The therapeutic modalities commonly used include:

Ultrasound: uses sound waves and may be used to decrease scar tissue, increase blood flow, or decrease pain.

Interferential Current: uses electrical current to decrease pain, can also be used to elicit muscle contraction and decrease swelling.

Acupuncture: uses small, solid needles to encourage healing, reduce pain, and improve function of affected areas of the body.

What can you do at home?

Rest: by decreasing your activity you allow your body a chance to heal itself. When you start to feel better it is important to ease back into activities which might be aggravating. Listen to your body - pain means that you have done too much.

Ice: ice decreases the metabolism of your cells so that they do not die despite a decrease in oxygen to the injured area. Ice should be kept on for approximately 15 minutes, several times a day. The injured area should be elevated (above the level of your heart) at the same time. Use a wet towel between the ice and your skin to protect against frostbite. You can use frozen veggies, cold packs, or real ice.

