

Making practice a pleasure

By combining deep-tissue laser therapy and traditional chiropractic, one chiropractor is putting positive energy into his patients and his practice.

BY AMANDA CAPITANIO

YOU MIGHT THINK AN INDOOR BASEBALL TRAINING FACILITY TO BE AN UNLIKELY PLACE to find a chiropractor, but for Ken Kaufman, DC, it was a natural fit. The economic downturn hit his practice hard and he decided to focus on a niche practice, which he launched as Sarasota Sports Medicine, within a branch of Extra Innings.

Opportunity from adversity

After Kaufman moved his traditional family practice into the sports facility, he soon realized he needed more than just his hands to respond to the complex injuries he was now treating. What's more, Kaufman had also been named team chiropractor for the Baltimore Orioles spring training and rehabilitation teams.

In addition, then, to his established patient base, Kaufman was now treating more athletes suffering from painful sports-related injuries. As many players were presenting with tendonitis from pitching and other repetitive-motion injuries, Kaufman needed more than traditional straight chiropractic methods to provide the level of pain relief these patients needed.

These new issues caused Kaufman to begin investigating pain-relief modalities: "I practice straight chiropractic, so I never used EMS, ultrasound, or any other kind of modality. I started to see articles and began looking into laser therapy as the potential relief modality to add to my practice."

Kaufman was quickly convinced that laser therapy was the right modality after his own personal experience. "I have stress fractures and two herniated discs at the base of my spine that had caused me pain for over two years. When I received my first laser treatment, I got up off the table with no pain for the first time in years. After that it was a no-brainer."

Soon thereafter, Kaufman purchased a deep-tissue-therapy laser and began treating conditions such as plantar fasciitis, tendonitis, patellar femoral syndrome, and other painful conditions caused by inflammation. A runner presented with a torn hamstring, and after seven treatments over the course of three weeks she was back to running track.

Kaufman treated another patient, a woman in her 80s, who was suffering from severely restricted range of motion due to chronic osteoarthritis. After eight treatments her range of motion went from severely restricted to mildly restricted and she was back in the gym with her personal trainer.



Improving patient relationships

For their part, patients appreciate laser treatments. The soothing sensation of the deep-tissue-therapy laser provides fast relief from both acute and chronic conditions. With his traditional chiropractic approach, Kaufman looks for the underlying cause of each patient's condition. The brief time it takes to administer laser therapy gives him the opportunity to understand the patient's habits and diagnose functional movement issues to get to the root of the pain.

"This completely resonates with patients," Kaufman says. "In this day and age, patients are active and are truly motivated to participate in their care." The resulting improvements in compliance are no surprise. "It was refreshing to have patients just accept my recommendations and comply with my treatment protocol." This partnership and the ability to provide fast pain relief has invigorated his patient base and eliminated the frustrations associated with hard-to-treat conditions and long recovery times.

"There is no modality that compares in terms of pain

“If someone is skeptical about the benefits of laser I give them one treatment for free and they can feel the difference for themselves.”

relief. My physical therapist colleague at Extra Innings says she gets more accomplished in five minutes with the laser than she would in 45 minutes with traditional ultrasound, ice, heat, and taping,” Kaufman says.

The road to recovery

To implement this new technology, Kaufman hosted several open houses, which resulted in nearly 20 new patients. After that, word spread throughout the community.

He posted information about his new therapy treatment on his website and made contact with community members via an email marketing campaign. He targeted a very specific group, active adults aged 30 to 55.

As patients signed up for treatment, questions like, “It helped my piriformis syndrome, can this help my mom’s arthritis?” became commonplace and the practice base expanded. Kaufman is even getting laser-therapy-treatment referrals from MDs he has never met.

Back in the game

One question some practitioners have about laser therapy concerns whether patients balk at paying cash for the treatment. “This is not a treatment I have to sell,” Kaufman says. “If someone is skeptical about the benefits of laser I give them one treatment for free and they can feel the difference for themselves.” He performs between 30 and 40 laser treatments per week; his deep-tissue-therapy laser enables him to deliver treatments in five to seven minutes.

Kaufman, whose practice is a mix of insurance and cash, has seen cash-based revenue increase rapidly following the introduction of the therapy laser. As a result he was able to hire a certified athletic trainer and a marketing coordinator to help build his business.

As Kaufman’s experience demonstrates, with a passion for healing and a commitment to patients, a practice can be profitable and enjoyable again. He’s found that integrating a pain-relief technology has brought him many benefits: “It has totally revolutionized my practice, I can’t really put it into other terms.”



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