

TREAT ME, BUT NO TRICKS PLEASE

A well-known medical writer for the New York Times stirred up some controversy on January 7 with an article associating “Voo-doo” with physical therapy. As she described the anecdotal success she had with an unproven, experimental technique (but a one becoming more accepted) she also and without merit tried to discredit the carefully studied and evaluated physical therapy techniques of rehabilitation, irresponsibly suggesting that they were more snake oil than science.

This is disturbing, partially because it ignores the many thousands of person-hours devoted to evaluating, refining and then reevaluating the closed chain and torque-measuring therapies, to take one of many examples. But it is also disturbing because yes, there is more to rehabilitation than meets the unschooled, muck-raking eye. The therapeutic relationship and mutual willingness of therapist or physician and patient to achieve a common goal -- the patient's health -- is an integral part of all healing. This therapeutic relationship is a prominent, priceless part of physical therapy.

Here at Manhattan Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, where we believe in the merits of physical therapy, we believe that questioning our techniques, that re-evaluation and hands-on experience count more than one case where someone stated an opinion after one experience, as the NY Times writer did. We have the peer-reviewed published articles to prove it our commitment to physical therapy:

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