

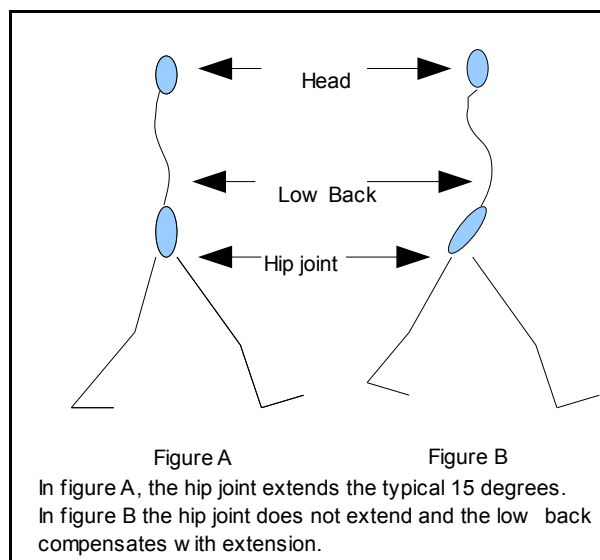
Standard rehabilitation protocols are designed to get you back to where you were before you were injured. However, this is often not the optimal state that your body needs to function properly. Local weakness in a muscle leads to compensation for that weakness and creates layers of movement dysfunction - injury then becomes the final layer. Standard rehabilitation only focuses on the outer layer. Once muscles begin compensating for one another, the entire region becomes altered and dysfunctional. To properly recover from an injury, we must find and begin unraveling ALL compensations, not just that caused by your injury. The Enhanced Recovery Program is designed to do exactly that.

To understand how the Enhanced Recovery Program works, we must first understand how our body deals with an injury. Movement is the result of nerves stimulating muscles to shorten or lengthen. The human body has multiple ways of achieving a movement. The optimal and efficient way is based soundly on bone structure, muscle fiber orientation, and firing patterns rooted in our brain and spinal cord. Changes in the environment, both external (a rock under the foot) and internal (protecting a weak or damaged tissue), lead to movement compensation and is less efficient than the original pattern. There is no problem with these temporary changes as this is a body's healthy response, however long-term movement pattern alterations transfer load to tissues not meant to handle them - increasing injury probability.

When a tissue is injured, i.e. a sprained ankle, our bodies automatically alter movement patterns to take loads off the injured leg; we limp. This alteration successfully decreases the load on the ankle, but when we limp we utilize different muscles to achieve the movement of walking or running. In the case of limping, our hip does not extend backwards fully as we walk. As a result the muscles responsible for bringing the leg forward tighten abnormally. If not corrected, this shorter position for the hip flexor becomes the normal position in our brain and spinal cord. Standard rehabilitation focuses on ankle strength and flexibility, but often ignores the changes in the hip. When your ankle feels better and you return to your normal activities your leg would still fail to extend backwards adequately. The body's compensation for reduced hip extension is increased extension in the low back (See figures A and B). A few weeks later your ankle is healed but back pain can now result because of your altered movement pattern that was never accounted for in your recovery. Your new rehab will focus on your back but your hip is still altered and more changes occur, either up the back, or down either of the legs. The Enhanced Recovery Program addresses ALL dysfunction not only your presenting complaint. This ensures that you will not only return to your previous functioning, but return to a much more optimal and injury-preventive state.

So what is the “Enhanced Recovery Program”? It is a proprietary combination of the following:

- Functional assessment of your entire movement system from head-to-toe, identifying abnormal and inefficient motion
- Specific application of manual therapy to restore lost movements
- A closely monitored strengthening program to improve only the best movement patterns, NOT your compensations



The program averages 6 weeks long but will vary based upon your recovery ability, amount of prior dysfunction, and days per week you attend. At the end of the program, you are ensured that you will return to your activity a better athlete than you were prior to injury. If you are in the midst of a competitive season, the program can be adjusted to account for your specific training schedule and designed to prevent a loss in conditioning. Each session consists of manual therapy, a dynamic warm-up, a specific strengthening program, and a skill-based cool down. All aspects of the Enhanced Recovery Program adapt each day as you improve leading you on your way to becoming stronger and more balanced than ever.

Dr. Corey R. Duvall is co-owner of The Stay Active Clinic. He is a Chiropractic physician and Crossfit certified strength and conditioning coach. The Stay Active Clinic follows a rational and evidence-based approach to provide the best musculoskeletal care, whether you are a weekend warrior or an elite athlete. Contact them at StayActiveClinic.com or StayActiveChiro@gmail.com.