

PRESS RELEASE

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Warrenton, August 2018

Assess Your 'Movement Health' to Lower Your Risk of Back Pain

Americans spend more than \$87 billion each year on low back and neck pain treatment, according to a study in the *Journal of American Medical Association*. To prevent that figure from rising further, we must find ways to prevent the high rate of back pain incidences from occurring in the first place. And that means getting real about how we move during a variety of activities throughout the day, whether we're working at a desk, tending to a garden or lifting a heavy object.

The path to better management of patients with back pain begins long before the first stab of pain, and that means getting to the root cause. How healthy are your movements? Physical therapy is one of the most effective ways to identify the movement patterns that put you at risk for back pain.

With the use of yearly screens and measures that are designed to assess how your body moves, such as the Functional Movement Screen™, physical therapists can work with patients to prevent low back and neck pain and a variety of other degenerative conditions. And with eight in 10 people suffering from back pain at some point in their lives, preventing incidences all together could take a huge chunk out of the staggering annual costs associated with treatments like medications and surgeries.

Preventing more cases of back pain would also ease some of the burden on providers, as well as the entire healthcare system. In fact, a [study](#) published in *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* identified back problems as the third most prevalent non-acute condition driving participants to see a doctor. By actively preventing back pain with the help of a physical therapist, you can save yourself a trip to the doctor.

During a movement screen, PTs observe how patients' knees, hips, core, ankles, shoulders and back perform as they complete a series of movements. It helps the rehab professional to identify or rule out issues, uncover areas of strength and weakness, and determine whether any preventive steps need to be taken.

Think about making an appointment with your physical therapist to assess your "movement health." You may just find that there's something you can be doing—or not doing—today to prevent the limitations and costs of low back pain.

About The Private Practice Section of the American Physical Therapy Association

Founded in 1956, the Private Practice Section of the American Physical Therapy Association champions the success of physical therapist-owned businesses. Our members are leaders and innovators in the health care system. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) represents more than 85,000 physical therapists, physical therapist assistants and students of physical therapy nationwide. For more information, please visit www.ppsapta.org.