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# Total Body Balancing Manual Techniques to Improve Patient Outcomes

As therapists, we strive to understand, communicate, and make a difference in our clients. At some point, we all feel the frustration of dealing with multiple symptoms and countless possible contributing factors. When that happens, it is very easy to get distracted by symptomatic complaints and lose perspective of the actual issue.

Each day, we commonly confront the dilemma of identifying the root cause of patient symptoms. When considering a painful shoulder, rather than assuming the subjective complaint of shoulder pain is coming from the structures of the shoulder, we must also appreciate the correlation of multiple influencing structures. For instance, consider the influence of the following structures that can affect the biomechanics of the shoulder:

- Lower Thoracic and Lumbosacral Spine (through the latissimus dorsi muscular and fascial attachments into the humerus)
- Rib Cage (mobility and motion)
- Abdominal Viscera and Fasciae (mobility and motion)
- Craniocervical Muscles (sternocleidomastoid and upper trapezius)
- Lower Extremity (via interconnections of the posterior chain of fascia)

Typically, manual therapy continuing education classes teach how to apply specific techniques to specific areas of the body. Classes focus on how to evaluate and treat a shoulder, neck, or back, but rarely do those classes identify the interrelationships between body parts or body systems.

Unfortunately, using such a specific local approach can miss how a problem in another part of the body could be influencing a local problem. To adequately address those more challenging patients

who have other areas of the body contributing to the site of pain, a whole-body evaluation and treatment approach needs to be adopted.

## Total Body Treatment Approach

With each client, we face the same two questions: where do I treat and what do I treat? If a client presents with complaints of pain and signs of dysfunction, the first question would be, where do I treat? Do I treat locally at the site of pain, or is the site of pain being influenced from elsewhere in the body? Once I decide where to treat, the second question is, what do I treat? Do I focus on dysfunction in the muscles, fascia, joints, lymphatics, or energetics?

At the D'Ambrogio Institute (DAI), we created the criteria-based **DAI Treatment Approach** to answer these questions. This approach starts with a quick Total Body

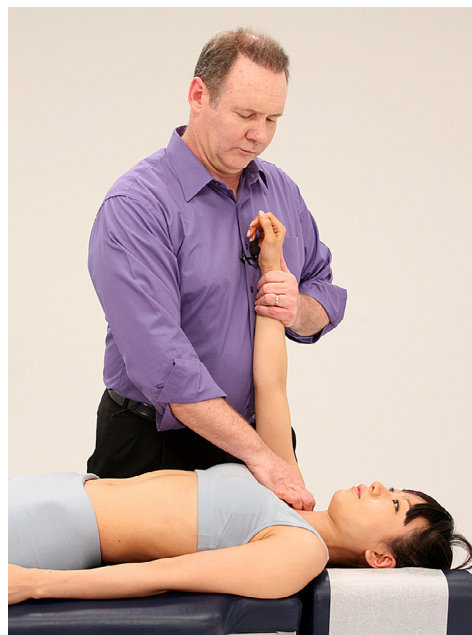
Screening Examination (TBSE) to help you decide where and what to treat. Local treatment is indicated if the problem is found locally (Local Lesion). However, if a problem in another part of the body is contributing to the local problem (Total Body Lesion), then local treatment will not be effective, and a Total Body Approach is indicated to treat the primary Total Body Lesion.

## Health and Homeostasis

A properly functioning musculoskeletal (MS) system is critical to maintaining health and homeostasis. For optimal health, the structure and function of the MS tissues and functional pathways (supply/drainage) must be in the following balanced hemodynamic state:

- **Tissue Motion:** All tissues must have freedom of movement for healthy tissue function and balanced tissue motion.
- **Tissue Inflow:** All tissues must have unobstructed blood flow, balanced nervous system input, and unrestricted energy circulation.
- **Tissue Outflow:** All tissues must have an unobstructed venous return, open lymphatic drainage pathway, and unrestricted energy circulation.

Total Body Lesions can cause structural impairments and functional limitations throughout the body, influencing local tissue repair (healing) and creating barriers to overall health and homeostasis. Total Body Balancing (TBB) can be used to remove these local and total body barriers and provide balance to the MS system by improving motion and restoring the supply (inflow) and drainage pathways (outflow) to the tissues creating a better environment for musculoskeletal tissue health and healing.



## What is Total Body Balancing?

**Total Body Balancing (TBB)** is a specifically designed curriculum based on the osteopathic principle of holism that uses a total body approach to evaluate and treat the Total Body Lesion. Expanding on the teachings of John Wernham, DO, TBB is an effective manual therapy treatment approach used to release extraneous lines of tension and modulate autonomic input throughout the body.



## TBB Treatment Approach

The TBB Treatment Approach includes three fundamental principles. The first is a criteria-based Total Body Evaluation to identify extraneous lines of tension contributing to the local area of complaint. Second, a Five Phase Treatment Sequence that uses principle-based TBB Specific Techniques to release these extraneous lines of tension throughout the entire musculoskeletal system (muscles, fascia, joints, capsules, and ligaments) and modulate the autonomic nervous system to improve mobility, circulation (vascular, lymphatic, and energetic flow), and overall level of function. Third, a Total Body Re-Evaluation is performed to measure change and determine progression.

## How Does Total Body Balancing Work?

TBB creates musculoskeletal (MS) system balance by using osteopathic long lever release techniques and rhythmic mobilization to:

- Release extraneous lines of tension throughout the body
- Balance the Transverse Diaphragms/Ventral Cavities (Bowstring)
- Improve biomechanics of the spine and pelvis
- Modulate the autonomic nervous system (ANS) (balance sympathetic/parasympathetic activity)
- Improve musculoskeletal tissue (fascia, muscle, joint) physiology
- Normalize structural and functional limitations in the MS system

The gentle rhythm of these oscillatory biomechanical long lever techniques

maximizes parasympathetic input while minimizing sympathetic output, modulating the ANS for health and healing. They are applied at the first sign of motion resistance (feather barrier), increasing their effectiveness, and providing a more thorough and less invasive treatment than other direct manual therapy techniques.

## TBB Treatment Application

The TBB Treatment Application influences ALL body systems (vascular, lymphatic, visceral, craniosacral, energetic, and musculoskeletal) and is appropriate for the following patient populations:

- Athletes (Sports and recreational injuries)
- Orthopedic Patients (Acute/chronic musculoskeletal injuries)
- Geriatric Patients
- Pediatric Patients
- Internal Medicine Patients
- Wellness and Maintenance Patients

It can be used either as a stand-alone treatment for general health or provide a comprehensive framework to support and integrate other manual therapy techniques and therapeutic exercise interventions. What does Total Body Balancing Do?

TBB balances the biomechanical structure of the body. Specifically, TBB balances musculoskeletal structures, including fasciae (superficial, deep, meningeal, visceral), muscles, joints (bones), and the Transverse Diaphragms (Bowstring). TBB improves posture, mobility, flexibility, and functional ROM.

TBB also balances the physiological function of the body. The long lever rhythmic mobilization modulates the ANS (sympathetic/parasympathetic activity), increases circulation (arterial flow, venous return, lymphatic drainage, interstitial fluid/CSF, and energetic qi circulation), and improves neural and axoplasmic flow. It reduces total body congestion and local swelling. It improves organ motility and mobility. It can improve mental and emotional health and decreases pain. Overall, TBB normalizes and balances physiology and creates a new homeodynamic state (optimal physiology).

## TBB Curriculum

Expanding on the teachings of John Wernham, DO, and based on the principle of holism, the specifically designed TBB Curriculum includes fundamental and advanced courses that teach the Total Body Treatment Approach used to evaluate and

treat the Total Body Lesion.

Total Body Balancing Level 1 (TBB1) teaches the fundamental TBB treatment protocol that consists of Total Body Evaluation (TBEV), Five Phase Treatment Approach, and Re-Evaluation. This Total Body Approach provides an essential evaluation and treatment template that can easily be expanded to include advanced techniques to address residual lines of tension that may remain after the fundamental protocol is performed.

In both Level 2 (TBB2) and Level 3 (TBB3), advanced positional techniques are taught to address residual lines of tension found on the TBB Re-Evaluation. Intended to supplement the fundamental techniques from Level 1 (TBB1), these advanced techniques can be applied either during or at the end of the treatment session to augment the treatment effect and improve outcomes. Additionally, for patients who cannot tolerate the fundamental treatment positions indicated in the Five Phase Treatment Approach, the advanced techniques taught in Level 2 (supine/prone) and Level 3 (side lying/sitting) can be used to create and complete the TBB treatment protocol in a position of comfort. TBEV (ARTS) includes advanced evaluation of the spine, rib cage, pelvis, sacrum, and organ system in both classes. **Note: This course is offered as a Home Study or weekend Intensive.**



## References:

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