

[IMAGE]

Bed Rest for Aches and Pains? Not an Effective Prescription

Bed rest has been recommended for many conditions, including low back pain and rheumatoid arthritis. The idea of prescribing bed rest for illness perhaps stemmed from a quote by the "father of medicine," Hippocrates: "In every movement of the body, whenever one begins to endure pain, it will be relieved by rest."

Hippocrates' advice was proffered in the 4th century B.C., but the practice of prescribing bed rest remains, despite little evidence of its effectiveness. In a review published in the journal *Lancet*, authors evaluated 39 different studies on bed rest prescribed for 15 different conditions, involving a total of 5,777 patients.

Results of the analysis revealed that bed rest was not an effective treatment recommendation. In 24 trials investigating bed rest following a medical procedure, no patients improved significantly and eight worsened significantly. And in 15 trials investigating bed rest as a primary treatment, no patients improved significantly, while nine worsened significantly.

Healing involves much more than rest, a fact which this study seems to emphasize but which many doctors seem to ignore. Don't settle for quick medical advice (pills, bed rest, etc.) that may end up doing more harm than good, or no good at all. Consult with your doctor of chiropractic for information on active, noninvasive approaches to managing a variety of health problems.

Reference:

Allen C, Glasziou P, Del Mar C. Bed rest: a potentially harmful treatment needing more careful evaluation. *Lancet* 1999; Vol. 354, pp1229-33.

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