Orthopedic Manual Therapy: An Evidence-Based Approach
Chad E. Cook, PT, PhD, MBA, OCS, FAAOMPT; Upper Saddle River, NJ; Prentice Hall; 2006; 624 pages; hard cover; $67.60

Orthopedic Manual Therapy: An Evidence-Based Approach by Dr Chad E. Cook is a unique text that includes a well-formatted, evidence-based outlook toward various manual therapy techniques to enhance or supplement the knowledge of any certified athletic trainer. Within the 624 pages of this hardcover text, readers will find concise descriptions, clear pictures, and solid rationales regarding the implementation of diagnostic and rehabilitative manual therapy methods. Furthermore, it provides clinicians with a mode of incorporating evidence-based techniques into their daily clinical practice.

The text is organized into 15 chapters and a glossary of terms. The first 5 chapters display important information regarding manual therapy, beginning with overall biomechanical, muscular, and psychological changes and progressing to orthopedic manual therapy assessment, clinical examination, treatment, and medical screening.

The chapters also provide a solid comparison of 6 well-known manual therapy theories. In addition, these initial chapters educate readers about evidence-based concepts used throughout the text, such as categorical descriptions of levels of evidence and sensitivity, specificity, and likelihood ratio interpretations.

The remaining 10 chapters are organized to discuss each body segment, as well as distinct individual chapters focusing on the cervical, thoracic, lumbar, and sacral spine. Each chapter follows the same progression of components, from prevalence, anatomy, and biomechanics to assessment, diagnosis, and clinical examination, and is followed by treatment techniques and outcomes.

Following the discussion of each component, a summary box is provided that condenses the take-home message for that particular section. Various tables are also included that compare research results from multiple studies regarding a particular diagnostic test or treatment approach. Figures outlining algorithms and clinical prediction rules are also provided when applicable.

This text does an excellent job of describing the numerous clinical examination special tests, range of motion maneuvers, and manual therapy techniques available per body region. Each concept is outlined in a separate box and includes detailed step-by-step processes on how the clinician should conduct each test. A rationale for the concept is included, as well as pictures displaying clinician and patient positioning. This text exceeds most traditional style approaches by presenting the information in a systematic format that is supported with evidence.

In regard to the proclaimed evidence-based approach, this text provides one of the more comprehensible formats for detailing evidence in an effective and applicable manner. The rationale for each clinical test is supported by research findings, and the individual chapters provide tables with available sensitivity, specificity, and likelihood values per diagnostic test.

However, most impressive is the detailed treatment outcomes section that concludes each chapter. Within this section, the research available for common manual therapy techniques is thoroughly discussed, and readers are provided with reasons to support the inclusion or exclusion of the technique within clinical practice.

I highly recommend Orthopedic Manual Therapy: An Evidence-Based Approach. It is an excellent supplemental resource for any athletic training clinician. Not only does this text provide concise insight into various manual therapy techniques per body segment, but it also acts as a valuable stepping stone to educate and enhance a clinician’s approach to evidence-based clinical practice.

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