

## **Flexion-Distraktion Relief for Low Back Pain**

Traction, in a variety of forms, has been used for centuries to relieve radiculopathy, sciatica, and pain. One form of traction, originally called McManis Technique by the Osteopathic profession, was later renamed, and implemented by the Chiropractic profession as Flexion-Distraktion.

Research studies have proven that Flexion-Distraktion of the lumbar spine decreases intradiscal pressure to -192 mmHg and can widen the spinal canal area where the nerves exit by up to 28%. Decreased intradiscal pressure is thought to improve tissue flow gradients, alter nociception (pain transmission), and allow retraction (recovery/repair) of prolapsed/herniated disc material. Widening the lateral canal (intervertebral foramen) where the nerves exit can alleviate nerve compression and irritation.

Flexion-Distraktion is a hands-on technique that uses a specific type of hydraulic table. This technique allows the chiropractor to feel changes in muscle tension and vertebral movement. It takes many years of training to develop a feel for how much pressure to apply. Too little pressure and the tissue will not stretch enough to reabsorb the disc and open the spinal canal. Too much pressure and the patient could be sore.

Flexion-Distraktion has been effective in treating Disc Bulge, Disc Herniation, Degenerative Disc Disease, Facet Joint Syndrome, Sciatica, Grade I and II Spondylolisthesis, and some mild to moderate cases of Central and Lateral Canal Stenosis. For patients with an Acute Disc Herniation, traditional manipulation might be much too aggressive at first, so Flexion-Distraktion is oftentimes one of the only techniques that the patient may be able to tolerate.

I have been using Flexion-Distraktion technique for the past 20 years. It is a skill I learned as a student intern at Palmer College of Chiropractic. I have found Flexion-Distraktion technique to be invaluable in treating my patients suffering from pain. Using this conservative technique by itself or along with other therapies, I have found that my patients recover much faster than those who receive traditional chiropractic adjustments. We follow the 50% rule with our treatments. We want to see at least a 50% reduction in pain by the 12th treatment to justify continuing care with this technique. Fortunately, we often see 50% reduction of pain within the first 6 treatments!

If you or someone you know is suffering from back pain and have not found the relief for which you are looking, please contact our office. We may be able to help you.

*Information provided by Christopher M. Renze, D.C., D.I.B.C.N., of Renze Chiropractic Clinic, P.C. For more information, visit [www.renzechiro.com](http://www.renzechiro.com) or call the office at 965-3844.*