



Active Release Technique: Revolutionary Treatment for Sports Injuries

By Dr. Steve Hoorn, A.R.T. Provider

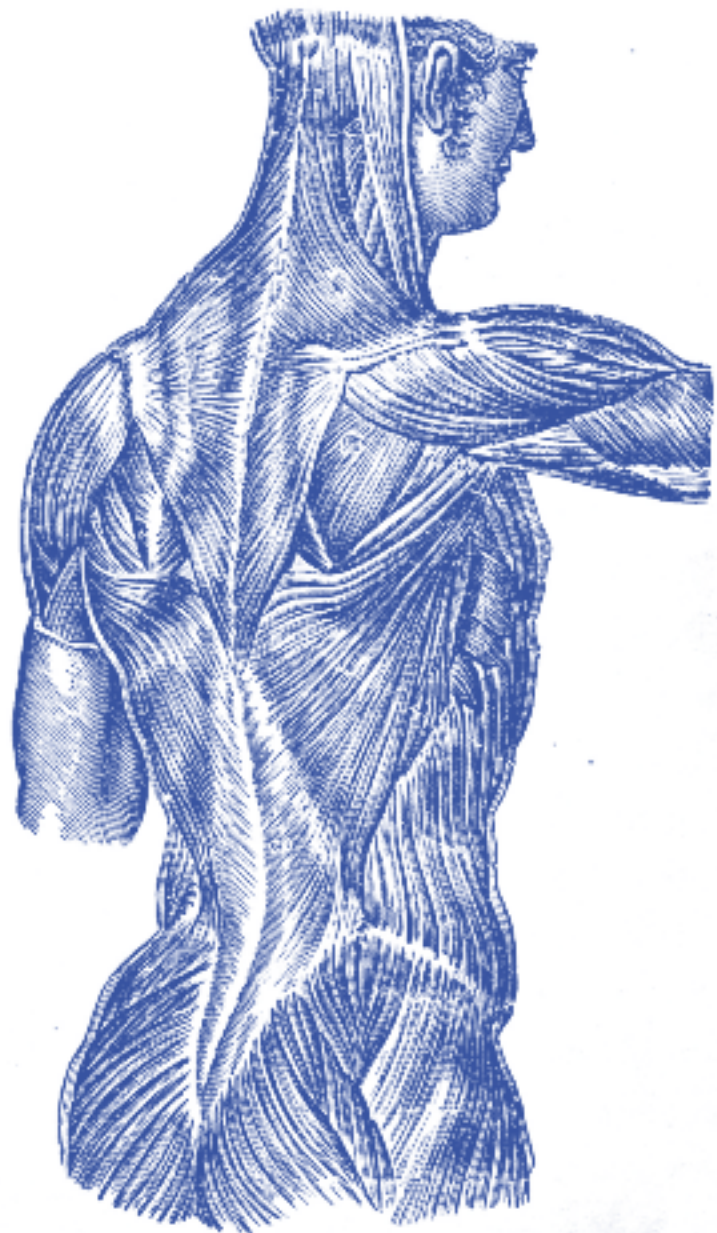
One of the most frequent questions I'm asked is "Just what is Active Release?" ART, or Active Release, is a revolutionary soft-tissue treatment system that was developed and patented in 1984 by Dr. Michael Leahy in response to his experience with patients that had underlying soft tissue injuries or scar tissue. It has been profiled in magazines such as Muscle and Fitness, Karate, Runner's World, Muscle Media 2000 and various other sports magazines. ART treats problems with muscles, tendons, ligaments, fascia and nerves. Many times these injuries result in chronically tight muscles and scar tissue which sticks to adjacent structures and restricts the range of motion of the involved muscles and joints, leading to shortening of muscles, loss of strength, and tendonitis.

Rather than describe the technique, it's easier to detail the most common injuries that ART practitioners treat.

1. Nerve entrapments or traction neuropathies: These include carpal tunnel and other repetitive stress injuries. Often patients with these conditions have been through physical therapy or have even had decompression surgery with poor results. This is due to the fact that nerves can be entrapped in various locations resulting in the same symptomology. For example, sufferers of carpal tunnel syndrome most often have shortening of the pronator teres muscle. The tendons connect through the wrist to the hand resulting in wrist pain due to the constant tension on the tendons. Surgery involves cutting the transverse ligament in the wrist to reduce pressure and tension but often doesn't address the actual origin of the entrapment in the forearm.

2. Cervical Brachial Syndrome/ chronic neck pain: At the point where the anterior and medial scalene muscles exit the neck, a concentration of nerves also exits. Shortening of these muscles, particularly from doing too many overhead pressing movements and/or turning of the head can shorten the muscles and irritate the nerves resulting in neck/shoulder pain.

3. Impingement Syndrome/Rotator Cuff Syndrome: This is a condition that most people have heard of, especially weight lifters. Surgical treatment usually consists of shaving down the bone or spurs at the acromium process to widen the area that the supraspinatus tendon runs through or removing part of the acromium process altogether. Often the problem, though, results from a weakness of some of the rotator cuff muscles that results in an imbalance in the shoulder musculature leading to pain.



4. Patella Femoral Syndrome/knee pain: There has been a lot of controversy over the years as to the proper way to deal with knee pain. Whether to surgically cut the ligaments of the quadriceps tendon to balance the strength of the muscles or to exercise the pain away, the first line of defense should be to develop and balance the muscles and ligaments surrounding the knee in order to prevent knee pain. It's much easier to balance the muscles using ART than to repair torn cartilage or ligaments.

5. Lumbar Sciatica/Piriformis Syndrome: This is a common problem that ART specialists encounter. This occurs when the nerve bundle exits the spine as the sciatic nerve and becomes entrapped in the fascia or musculature of the gluteal or leg musculature resulting in burning, tingling or numbness of the posterior or lower leg.

Contact Dr. Steve Hoorn, D.C., by calling 954-522-0040 at Fit Factor Studio 2, Main Street Gym or by email at drshoorn@yahoo.com. Outside of South Florida, in order to find a certified practitioner, ART has a provider locator on their website at www.activerelasetechniques.com.