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## **Myofascial release in sports and clinical therapies**

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**M**yofascial release (MFR) is a form of manual therapy that involves the application of a low load, long duration stretches to the myofascial complex, intended to restore optimal length, decrease pain, and improve function. The efficient movement can be inhibited by fascial restrictions and myofascial trigger points. Myofascial release therapies target fascial restrictions and MTrPs to increase range of motion (ROM) and muscle function prior to rehabilitation or physical activity. A systematic review was needed to examine the effectiveness of these therapies so that clinicians and athletes may use only the most efficacious methods. A search of PubMed, SPORT Discus, CINAHL, and Cochrane Library electronic databases was completed to identify articles; 10 articles were included. All but 2 studies observed a significant increase in ROM, whereas no study observed a significant change in muscle function following treatment. Therefore, clinicians should use myofascial release therapies prior to rehabilitation or physical activity, as they eff actively increase

ROM without decreasing muscular function, resulting in increased movement efficiency and decreased injury risk. and inhibit normal muscular function. Myofascial trigger points (MTrP) may develop independently or in conjunction with fascial restrictions, resulting in inhibition of normal muscular function. Although many of the manual therapies decrease pain associated with myofascial restrictions and MTrPs, this review will examine the effectiveness of each of the manual therapies for increasing ROM, muscular activation, and muscular force production.

These clinical measures may be of the greatest importance to sports medicine clinicians, strength and conditioning professionals, and athletes alike, as not all myofascial restrictions and MTrPs result in active pain, and some of the discussed therapies are used prophylactically prior to the onset of pain. More importantly, improvements in ROM and muscular function can lead to improved movement efficiency and reduced injury risk.

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