

the physios

specialists in orthopaedic & sports medicine

news

Improvements to Taptonville House

As you will no doubt have noticed, Taptonville House has been undergoing extensive building work over the last six months.

Although the building during this time has been both a challenge to visit and work in(!) we are sure the work will be well worth it. We have made the reception area more than twice as large, taken off the old low ceiling and created a light and airy entrance which is spacious and welcoming.

The whole downstairs area is also going through thorough refurbishment so, very



shortly, the makeover will be complete! Once the builders are offsite the car park will re-open too. We really appreciate the patience all visitors to Taptonville House have shown over the last few months – we hope that, once the work is complete, you too will think that it has all been worth it. Thank you for bearing with us during this time.

Fresher's Fair

Freshers week saw 'The Physios' braving the annual surge of students at Sheffield University's Freshers Fair at the Octagon Centre, where over 17,000 students pass through the centre in one day!

At times the scene was reminiscent of a stampede as people rushed to grab any free items on offer! 'The Physios' proved a popular stop, with a 'challenge' to students to demonstrate their ability to balance on a gym ball without touching the floor. Lots of students took part with the winning participant recording a time of over 10 minutes – a real demonstration of balance and control!

We hope to have increased the profile of the clinic amongst students and raised awareness of the assistance we can provide with sports injuries and other problems.



Westlife with video-wall graphics backdrop

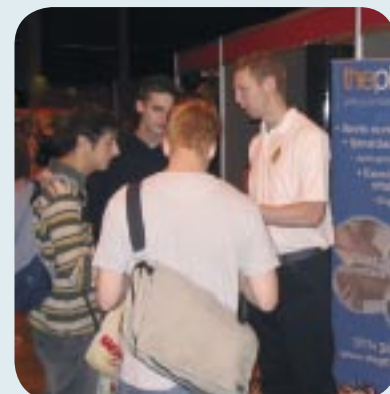
McFly, Busted, Westlife and 'The Physios' - What's the connection?

Many people comment on the striking canvas that hangs centre stage in one of 'The Physios' consulting rooms. The oil painting that depicts the torso of an athlete attracts so many comments and yet few know that this original piece links us (slightly obscurely!) to boy bands Westlife, Busted and McFly!

The artist behind the painting is Helene Spencer who has gradually moved from the more traditional art forms to video graphics (which can be seen on the giant video walls that form the backdrop to live performances) and her work has attracted the eye of many top performing artists. Helene is now in great demand which unfortunately means that she has little time these days to return to the easel although some of her older work keeps popping up in unexpected places – one of her paintings appeared in the magazine 'Yorkshire Life' recently! Helene is married to Chris (with whom physio Paul Hattam has enjoyed a friendship dating back to school days) and they live 'away from it all' on a farm in the Yorkshire Dales.



Helene's original canvas of an athlete's back



Physiotherapist Tim Cook provides advice to passing students at the Freshers Fair.

Round Up...

Paul Hattam was very pleased to appoint new physiotherapists **Tim Cook** and **Michael Reddington** to the Practice in September and October respectively. Paul travelled to Italy in November for the final part of the series of courses he has been teaching on over the past year. Two new courses are set to run in Milan and Rome in 2006/7 so the Italian evening classes should continue to serve him well!

Physiotherapist **Rivca Cohen** and fiancé Darren tied the knot in August on a beautiful beach location on the Greek island of Santorini. After a relaxing honeymoon, Rivca was back at work practising under her married name - **Rivca Swinson**. On 28th November, she gave birth to their first child, a son called Riley (7lb 4oz). Mother and baby are doing well!

Meanwhile, **Sue Dale** has been accepted onto Injection Therapy training having passed her preliminary entry exams with flying colours. Well done Sue!

Practice Manager **Miriam Cates** has recently been appointed to the Sheffield First for Health & Wellbeing Committee, which meets bi-monthly to discuss and implement health policy in Sheffield.

STOP PRESS! Just before going to print, we appointed musculoskeletal physiotherapist **Julie Wilkinson** and we welcome her to our team.

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Q&A

Physiotherapists Tim Cook and Michael Reddington joined the team in October and are now providing a number of clinics at Taptonville House. We asked them more...



Tim Cook



Michael Reddington

What led you to choose a career in physiotherapy?

TC: The way the body systems work fascinates me, and also with my love for sport, it was an obvious choice!

MR: I have always enjoyed sport and after spending some time at a rehabilitation hospital in Rotherham I knew I wanted to be a physio from then on.

What are you particularly enjoying in your work at 'The Physios'?

TC: I am really enjoying working with an excellent group of people, both patients and colleagues alike!

MR: I like the variety of patients, nice consulting rooms and of course the lovely staff!

Summarise your professional career since graduating?

TC: I studied at Bradford University and graduated 7 years ago. Since then I have worked mostly in Sheffield, with brief stints in Derby and Castleford. I am currently also working at the Northern General Hospital, where I specialise in acute sports and spinal injuries.

MR: I graduated from the University of East Anglia in Norwich in 1996 after which I practiced in Sheffield (at the Hallamshire and Children's Hospitals) and then in York. I've recently returned to Sheffield to work at the Northern General as an Extended Scope Practitioner, specialising in spinal problems and have just about finished moving house! I'm completing an MSc at Sheffield Hallam University and have just started writing my dissertation.

What do you do when you're not working?

TC: I enjoy going to the gym for a workout.

MR: I enjoy sport especially rugby (although I have had to retire!) but also squash and tennis. I also like good food and wine!

And finally...you're cooking to impress...what do you cook?

TC: I do a wicked fish pie!

MR: Autumnal soups are a favourite at the moment: chorizo and Tuscan bean or a good rich chicken soup - well worth the preparation time!

COMPETITION WINNER! Congratulations to Gemma Noble who is the lucky winner of a designer memory foam pillow worth over £50. The question we asked in our last newsletter was 'By what name was Taptonville House formerly known?' The answer, which was to be found on our website, is **Broomhill Lodge**. For more information about the practice, why not visit www.thephysios.com?



VISCOSUPPLEMENTATION

An Emerging Treatment for OSTEO-ARTHRITIS

What is Viscosupplementation?

Osteoarthritis (OA) should no longer be considered an inevitable accompaniment of aging but rather a dynamic and largely treatable disease. Viscosupplementation is a procedure that involves the injection of a gel-like substance, hyaluronan, into a joint to supplement the viscous properties of synovial fluid. It has become an increasingly popular treatment option in recent years for people with OA and is most commonly used at the knee joint. The hyaluronan is given as a series of weekly injections directly into the affected joint over three to five weeks.

What does it do?

Hyaluronan provides viscoelastic properties to the synovial fluid and is a fundamental constituent of articular cartilage¹. In a normal joint it is highly concentrated at the surface coating of articular cartilage, as well as the superficial layers of the synovial membrane. Its properties enable it to function primarily as a lubricant, shock absorber and semi-permeable barrier regulating metabolic exchange between the cartilage and the synovial fluid².

In OA, the hyaluronan of the synovial fluid becomes degraded which consequently reduces its viscoelastic properties. This increases biomechanical loading of the joint and contributes to cartilage breakdown and erosion of the synovial lining resulting in pain with loss of range and function³. It is not at all clear how hyaluronan relieves the symptoms of osteoarthritis for such a long period of time since, within a few days of injection into the joint, it can no longer be found there. It may be that it promotes long-lasting changes by stimulating the lining cells of the joint to synthesize more hyaluronan.

What are the benefits?

The beneficial results are relief of pain, improved joint mobility and ambulation – effects that appear to last for anything from several months up to one year. However, as with any treatment, patients need a clear understanding of what to expect - if they

think that viscosupplementation will cure their arthritis, they are setting themselves up for disappointment but patients who understand that it is part of a comprehensive program including physiotherapy treatment will be more satisfied with the outcome.

Quite severe OA of the knees left Mrs P of Fulwood unable to walk without pain and she was no longer able to enjoy her favourite pastime of hiking. She said about her treatment "I have found that a combination of the injections and physiotherapy has been a tremendous help and have enabled me to walk and hike again". Another of our patients had been suffering from arthritis in her shoulder for many months. Her movement was extremely restricted and she was unable to lift her arm without pain. Mrs H, came to 'The Physios' and received a range of treatment, including viscosupplementation. Mrs H said 'The injections were brilliant – I've had no trouble with my shoulder since I've had the treatment.'

Is there any evidence for its use?

The Cochrane Library⁶ recently updated its systematic review of the evidence for viscosupplementation for the treatment of OA at the knee. Randomised controlled trials (RCTs) were eligible including single and double-blinded studies, placebo-based and comparative studies. Sixty-three trials with a median quality score of 3 (range 1 to 5) were identified. Follow-up periods varied between day of last injection and one year. Thirty-seven trials included comparisons of hyaluronan/hylan and placebo, nine trials included comparisons of intra-articular (IA) corticosteroids, and five trials included comparisons of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). The pooled analyses of the effects of viscosupplements against 'placebo' controls generally supported the efficacy of this class of intervention. Of note is the 5 to 13 week post injection period which showed a percent

improvement from baseline of 11% to 54% for pain and 9% to 15% for function. In general, comparable efficacy was noted against NSAIDs and longer-term benefits were noted in comparisons against IA corticosteroids. In general, few adverse events were reported. Overall the authors concluded that, based upon analysis of all RCTs, viscosupplementation is an effective treatment for OA of the knee with beneficial effects on pain and function at different post injection periods - especially at 5 to 13 weeks.

Where can I receive this treatment?

A number of doctors and physiotherapists have begun to recommend or use this treatment, mainly for patients with OA of the knee although it is increasingly being used for other conditions too. If you would like to know more speak to your physiotherapist.

Where can I find out more?

Check out our website for links and a reference list.

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Are You Ready for The Slopes?

The dash to the Alps is underway for some serious skiing or snow-boarding and yet adequate preparation for a week of demanding exercise on the slopes is often overlooked. Here are our top tips to help you stay injury-free on the slopes:

- **Pre-ski/board training should commence at least 8 weeks prior to your holiday** and should include activities such as stair climbing, running, cycling, swimming and team sports. Start with about 20 minutes exercise three times a week and build up to 40 minutes, four times a week.
- **Strengthening of muscles specific to skiing and boarding such as thigh, calf, stomach and arm muscles will reduce the risk of injury** and increase enjoyment and endurance on the slopes. You really need to use ski specific movements to help improve the relaxation-contraction coordination of the prime movers and stabilizing muscles as this will lead to more efficient movement and performance. Consider a pre-season assessment and extra exercise program prescribed by one of 'The Physios'.
- **One of the main contributors to injury in the recreational skier is the absence of a pre-ski warm-up routine so warm up to ski, don't ski to warm up!** A proper warm-up prepares the muscles you will use when skiing - a warm muscle can give a 15-20% increase in elastic properties helping to improve performance and prevent muscle strains. It will also prepare the joints for movement through a full range of motion. Warming-up until you have a light sweat (or glow!) helps achieve this and on cold or windy days it is vital that you take the extra time to get really warmed-up before taking to the slopes.
- **You should do at least 4 stretches of thigh, hamstrings, calf and arm muscles before putting on your skis or board.**
- **Start each day with some easy runs on the slopes** - this is also important after lunch or a break of more than 15 minutes.
- **Stop skiing or boarding if you feel tired** to avoid injury from loss of control.
- **Good back care is essential for skiers and boarders.** A simple exercise to strengthen your back is to arch your back while standing with hands on hips.
- **If you are lucky enough to be having a long ski holiday, a rest day is advisable after 3 days of skiing** to allow your muscles to replenish vital energy sources.
- **If you are unfortunate enough to sustain an injury whilst skiing or boarding, remember that early physiotherapy treatment is important to give you the quickest possible recovery.**

A Good News Story

Back in 2002 Paul Hattam's son James, then only 4 years old, was diagnosed with a hip problem called Perthes Disease. His plight was publicised in 2003 when Paul decided to raise funds for the Sheffield Children's Hospital and The Perthes Society by jumping out of an aircraft at 13,000ft! Since then, many people have enquired about his progress so we thought we'd run a little feature (James thought this would be cool too!).

The condition affected his ability to walk and run normally and, despite lots of physiotherapy and hydrotherapy, the condition forced a period of immobilisation in hospital and a number of weeks with an 'A frame' hip spica. The prognosis didn't look very promising in the early stages and there was the real prospect of serious curtailment in James' normal activities like running and football as well as the need

for premature joint replacements in the future. He nevertheless made the most of the situation - particularly the giant skateboard that he was given to lie on to move around at school!

Many people around James showed their concern in different ways and lots started to pray for a complete recovery of his condition. This was an amazing experience for him and the rest of the family and as time went on our confidence grew as we saw real progress in his condition. James is now off all active treatment - even the physiotherapy is almost at an end! The consultant, who provided excellent care throughout, gave the go ahead for James to start trampolining in the summer and he now enjoys virtually un-restricted exercise. James still has 6 monthly check-ups but the bone seems to be recovering well and he looks set to make a great recovery!



James with his red (Man Utd) 'A-frame' plasters in 2003



James bouncing like never before!