

What is ART®?

Active Release Techniques® is a patented, series of over 500 soft tissue protocols, which treats problems involving muscles, tendons, fascia and nerves. Not to be confused with traditional massage, ART® is a movement based, hands-on technique that breaks down adhesions.

How do adhesions form?

Adhesions, (aka: knots, scar tissue) can form from overuse or acute injury. Both of these type injuries cause faulty mechanics of the tissue, leading to lack of blood supply, and ultimately pain and restriction.

Who can use an ART® treatment?

Conditions such as tendonitis, sciatica, plantar fasciitis, and carpal tunnel are just a few of the injuries that can benefit from ART®. “Repetitive motion monsters”, such as runners with shin splints or people who type all day with tennis elbow, find great benefit from this technique. Some of the most chronic conditions, that haven’t responded to traditional interventions, are where we see our best results.

Who does ART®?

Licensed Physiotherapists, Massage Therapists, Chiropractors, Osteopaths, and Athletic Therapists can become credentialed. It is important when choosing an ART® practitioner that the individual be ART® Certified. You may find that many people state the “do” ART®, but have never received any formal instruction. All ART® certified providers have received hands on training and have passed a formal, practical exam. The benefit of choosing a physiotherapist as your ART® provider is that you will also be given a home exercise program that allows the gains made during treatment to last.

What can I expect from an ART® treatment?

Initially, the tissue will be assessed to evaluate the texture, tension and movement of the area. As a patient, you will be asked to move in a certain direction as the practitioner applies tension over the affected area. There should be 3-5 passes per treatment area, so ART® treatments are relatively short (10-20 minutes depending on the area), but the results are fast. Most people will see significant benefits within 6-8 sessions. It is common to feel a duplication of your pain symptoms during a treatment, but ART® treatments should NOT be excruciatingly painful. You and your treatment provider work together to establish the right amount of tension to break the adhesion but keep the treatment within your comfort level.

About the author: Beth Ciavaglia is a registered physiotherapist working out of PSI Physiotherapy and Sports Medicine Center West. She is ART Certified in Upper and Lower Extremity Techniques.