Geriatric Wellness: Utilizing Medical Therapeutic Yoga in Physical Therapy
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Abstract
In the US, treatment of the elderly accounts for 65% of the health care budget. 2 of every 3 older Americans have multiple chronic conditions and over 65% of Medicare beneficiaries with “arthritis” have 5 or more co-morbidities.

Very few older Americans get 30 minutes or more exercise for five days a week or more. The report states that up to 34% of adults age 65 to 74 are inactive and up to 44% or almost half of adults age 75 are inactive. (CDC) Regular exercise can reduce life-threatening falls in the elderly by 58%. (US Preventative Services Task Force)

PT has become synonymous with treatment to address impairment and function on and off the mat. Many older Americans seek PT’s for arthritis, osteoporosis, post-surgical recovery, heart disease, and general wellness. (APTA; Dean)

Introduction
“Wellness is more than being free from illness, it is a dynamic process of change and growth.” The National Wellness Institute

This client came to PT reluctantly after prior PT at another practice and continued bouts of low and mid back pain as well as foot and balance problems. Her job and avocation as a flutist resulted in sedentary lifestyle, with sitting problems.

She began attending Yoga classes in March 2015 and continues to current 1-2x/week to augment individual PT. Use of props and modifications of poses utilized.

Methods
Medical Therapeutic Yoga
Medical Therapeutic Yoga is the practice of yoga in medicine, rehabilitation, and wellness settings by a licensed health care professional trained and certified through the Professional Yoga Therapy (PYTI) post-graduate program. PYTI advocates for integrated healthcare and the use of yoga in medicine, rehabilitation, and wellness practices.

The PYTI Mission includes:
- Evolving yoga for use in healthcare and wellness.
- Teaching partnership-based rehabilitation
- A PYT can fully utilize the power of yoga through biomedical science.
- A PYT’s medical and professional education makes them the ideal practitioner to apply yoga therapeutically to complex patient populations.

CGD: Recurrent LBP Limits sit; stand, and walk and transfers.
Meds: Metformin, Warfarin, Synthroid
Activity: Walks 20 min/day at slow pace, limited by balance fears.
- Limits activity due to fear of pain.
Considered community based exercise but does not feel that she can safely do the programs.

Her goals: decrease pain and safely increase activity. Increase “Spine Strength”
Self report: “I have always had bad posture”

Results
PT Treatment Feb - May 2015, 9 visits.
- Treatment included myofascial and soft tissue mobilization, Grade 3 mobilizations thoracic spine. Core strengthening training spine, scapular stabilizers, hip/ptelvis, pelvic floor and spine. Postural and Breath training. Assessment of feet with addition of mobilization and exercise. Balance and functional movement exercise.
- She began attending Yoga classes in March 2015 and continues to current 1-2x/week to augment individual PT. Use of props and modifications of poses utilized. Positioning with counterforce and mobilizations during poses utilized as well as use of restorative positions and progression of shoulder girdle, pelvic girdle and core strength.

Discussion
PTs as Integrative Healthcare Providers: How do we Bridge Rehab and Wellness?
As “movement specialists”, PTs are uniquely situated to promote wellness, fitness and healthy movement and prevention through proactive based practices and community awareness. (APTA; Dean)

Conclusion
S. came to Embody PT because of pain and limitations; she stayed for wellness, health, and improved function.

References and contact information available. Many Thanks to S. for sharing her story!