Introduction to Fascia and Inflammation

Welcome to the conquering chronic Inflammation Summit. I'm your host, Dr. David Jockers. And today we're talking about the fascia and inflammation connection.

When we talk about inflammation we've got to talk about this connective tissue we call fascia that connects our muscles bones ligaments right. That's connecting all the parts of our body together.

And most people have really no idea the major role fascia plays in our body. And there's so many people out there that are dealing with really tight, congested fascia.

We're going to talk about its important role when it comes to really seeing fascia, helping the body detoxify, helping improve overall circulation and healing.

My guest is Deanna Hansen. She's a pioneer in the field of fascia decompression for physical and emotional transformation. With more than 20 years of hands on clinical experience, Deanna created Block Therapy, a fascia release protocol to relieve chronic pain and disease, encourage healthy detoxification and reverse cellular aging.

You can find her website, blocktherapy.com. And we're going to go on a deep dive into fascia. You're also going to learn the important role your feet play in your overall health and wellness.

And so without further ado, let's go into the interview. Deanna Hansen, great to connect with you. And this is such an important topic. Understanding the role of fascia and how that plays into all forms of chronic inflammation and particularly into pain syndromes as well.

So let's start with the, you know, really understanding what fascia are. And thank you so much. First of all for having.

What Fascia Does in the Body

Is I don't even know how to exactly ask that question. So I've spent over 60,000 hours diving into the fashion system with my hands on other people's bodies and my own, and I do feel I have a bit of a different perspective on the fascia system as a result of this.

So essentially, fascia is this beautiful connective tissue that connects every single one of our trillion cells together. It's the communication system between all cells.

And it's really here to provide both stability and mobility for the body. The ultimate goal is that there's optimal space in and around every cell, because if there's space, there's ease of flow of nutrients into the cells, as well as the removal of waste and toxins away from the cells.

So that's really the goal of the fascia, primarily comprised of collagen and elastin. Again, it creates both the stability and the mobility, the challenges we are constantly being afflicted with external forces on the body, gravity being, of course, the one most prominent that's continually pulling us down toward the Earth.

And we're not balanced in our body, we're not symmetrical. We're dominant on one side. So we don't simply compress linearly. We literally wind down over time in one direction or another, depending on a number of factors.

So what happens with the fascia system is as our body starts tipping over, we start having a migration of collagen to the areas where we need to build up false walls and false floors in the body.

Otherwise we tip over so this creates adhesions forming and gripping to anything in its pathway, ultimately on the bone, and can grip with a force of up to 2,000 pounds per square inch, holding the body out of alignment in these negative fashion patterns.

So this creates stagnancy in the body. It blocks blood and oxygen flow and nutrients from entering the cells as well as keeps the area stagnant. And that attracts, of course, you know, disease in the body, parasites, bacteria, fungus, whatever.

basically we create these scenarios, though, for the fashion system to become clogged with debris, with waste, with toxins. And then this creates dis ease, pain and aging as we understand it in the body as well as impacts our size and shape.

Yeah. So important. And so how does somebody end up getting fascial adhesions. What are like some of the major risk factors. Well basically we have this beautiful body that if we actually knew how to use it properly, we could really go through time and have a very different perspective on what aging looks like.

So we have this diaphragm muscle, this muscle, the foundation of the rib cage that when it's working properly, it moves up and down in the body. And when we exhale it lifts.

So it's basically the counterforce to gravity. And also there's all of this wonderful research now coming out. I'm so grateful I love the breath book.

by, James Nestor. He talks a lot about the exhale as well as the carbon dioxide oxygen balance in the body. But if our body is working as it's designed, we have the foundations, we have the breath to keep that space within the body.

However, if we're not conscious of posture and breath, and most people aren't, simply because we really weren't trained to be conscious of how to use the body properly.

you know, we play these sports that are so asymmetrical and that creates asymmetries in the body. It creates a winding of the fascia and a tipping over of the body.

So then we ultimately have to have these counterbalances created, which again is this migration of the collagen away from the balance. So imagine walking 120 pound German Shepherd.

That's really well trained. You've got it on the leash beside you and there's no pull on your body. However, now imagine the same mass of dog yanking on your body constantly.

So these are in the moment forces, but the body, the equal and opposite side of the body, is going to contract so that we don't land flat on our face.

How Adhesions Form from Posture and Breathing

Now, if this is a constant forming, slow version of that, which is really what happens over time with gravity and unconscious living, the body is constantly developing these false walls and false floors to stop us from tipping over.

But again, that migration of the collagen, which is what the adhesions are made of, which basically same as scar tissue, they block blood and oxygen flow.

They hold us in these negative holding patterns. And whenever I'm looking at a body, I always look down at the feet, the foundation first, because we have these beautiful structures that are designed to allow us to move through life and support our body weight and all the different landscapes that we that we walk on.

However, most people don't recognize how to support their structures, so we end up pancake in the feet. And I always look at one foot is always going to act like a flat tire.

It's going to be driving away from the body and then the other side is going to have to anchor again to stop us from tipping over. So through our lifetime, with whatever we're doing, whether we play sports, what our job is, if we're sitting in front of a computer, slouched all day, if we're doing manual labor, playing an instrument, all of these things add up to create the fascist system that we have today, including injuries, surgeries, as well as other stresses.

Even in relationship, it all impacts how we breathe. And how we breathe is really the key, because if we're breathing optimally with this beautiful muscle, we are feeding the cells properly and keeping the body clean.

However, when the diaphragm becomes compromised and pain, fear and stress cause you to reactively hold the breath, we start breathing through the muscles of the upper chest, and then we really limit the amount of toxins we can remove from that exhale, as well as the amount of oxygen we can bring in from the inhale.

So the body becomes thick and dense and heavy and congested. Think of blowing up a balloon. It's nice and full and it glows almost defying gravity. And then take half the air out of the balloon and it becomes wrinkled.

And you can have dust and debris caught in the creases, and it becomes heavy and dense. That's what the body does over time when we don't have that optimal breath.

and what does a healthy respiration cycle look like? If you're watching somebody observing them? What are you looking for with their respiration cycle?

We want to see the belly moving first. So if we're just in a relaxed state, really the breath should be coming from the belly. If you see somebody breathing.

We don't want to see that chest rising unless we're doing strenuous activity. And then that's that last phase of the breath that should be happening. Yet most many people at least are really using this area to breathe from all the time.

So again, we're we're very depleted in in what we're able to do at the base of the lungs is where the majority of the oxygen receptor sites reside. So for breathing these shallow, rapid breaths, we're not pulling the air deeply enough into the lungs for optimal absorption or optimal removal of that carbon dioxide.

And in just. Like a certain amount of breaths. Or do you count the amount of breaths? Two because I imagine people are doing short, shallow breaths, they're probably taking more.

They probably have more respiration cycles per minute than somebody is taking more of a deeper, you know, with their belly, you know, in the diaphragm kind of pulling all the way down.

I would imagine it would be last breaths per minute. Absolutely. And in fact, in that breath book, they were saying that the optimal amount of breath is 5.5 seconds for inhale and exhale, equaling five and a half breaths per minute, where many people are probably breathing, you know, every couple of seconds they're they're going through that respiration.

yeah. Yeah. It's so important. And that diaphragm plays such important role. I know I've interviewed somebody else recently about pelvic floor. Right.

And how, you know, when there's adhesions in the fashion, the pelvic floor, you're not going to it's harder to breathe. Right. It's. And so breaking up those adhesions can be super helpful.

And so many women are dealing with pelvic floor issues. So I taking that as a function of how the fascia will wrap around the calves in the feet, because whenever we're looking at a body, I'm always looking for the cause sites to be an issue site.

And they're they're at a distance. And because the diaphragm is this plate of muscle in the center of the body, when it's moving up and down again, it's creating a beautiful massage to all the abdominal organs, the heart and

the lungs.

However, if it's not, it's the extremities that are going to become the coldest because they're the furthest from the engine. So if you have a low back pain and you have all these wonderful treatments on your low back, but then you stand up and you start walking and you fall back into that negative fascia pattern, then the causes haven't been addressed.

And I always say that the limbs are like the tent poles. When we have tent poles firmly in the ground, your tent is nice and taut, and all the contents inside the tent are safe.

However, when the limbs don't have that structure and stability, that impacts what's going on in the core of the body, and it creates that twisting and that twisting, basically, here's, here's your diaphragm. Of course.

Releasing Fascia with Decompression and Breath

It's it's a plate moving up and down. And it's working properly. Again. We're getting this beautiful massage. When we collapse. The muscle is going into a twist and a holding pattern again with the force of up to 2,000 pounds per square inch.

So even if you're doing breathing exercises to be able to release that muscle, to allow it to optimally function requires an ability to get those adhesions to melt from the ribs so that we can activate more of the diaphragm.

Yeah. So how do we go about starting to release the fascia. So fascia decompression. So basically we compress over time as we get older we become smaller and lighter typically.

So what we want to do is we want to go backwards through time in the tissue. So adhesions basically gets that the tissue becomes colder. And I, I live in Winnipeg.

So I'm very familiar with you know, if you go outside and it's -30 and you try to start your car, a it might not start and B if it does, you might have to let it warm up for 30 minutes or so before you can drive it.

Or if you're in a nice warm place like Florida, you can start the car right away and you can just go on your way. So if people haven't been breathing properly over time, their body essentially is a lot colder in general.

And these adhesions basically, it's frozen tissue and you can feel that people's feet feel cold. Their calves feel really dense. We shouldn't have dense tissue when it's relaxed.

It should be nice and and fluid and and malleable. So what we want to do is we want to start creating heat. And there's ways we can do that. So the first thing your diaphragm is like the body furnace I live in a 30 storey building.

And if it's -30 outside and I only have a space heater, I can heat one room in my apartment. You turn on the building's furnace. Now I can heat the entire building.

So bringing the breath down to the diaphragm is number one, because we want to turn on that really powerful engine, this muscle. And then the other thing is, through the process of pressure over time and what we do with our process of block therapy, as an example, we have people lie throughout the entire body in positions, and you're lying on a tool for a minimum of three minutes, because pressure over time creates heat.

It creates blood flow. So when you combine pressure over time with that diaphragmatic breath, you're heating the body from the inside as well as the outside.

And then when you're in position, we teach you how to navigate not on the surface but through the layers of fascia. Kind of the difference between if you're in a boat on the ocean or going deep sea diving, we want a deep sea dive because the adhesions, again will grip and cure to bone with that 2,000 pound per square inch force.

So that's where we're locked and sealed away. So to be able to do that, we teach you how basically to follow the Fibonacci sequence, because everything in nature has been created from the sequencing of numbers, the spiral pattern.

This is the Fibonacci sequence, how our bodies were created, but also the patterning of how we age. So when we are in position, we don't move on the surface.

But we teach you how to twist and turn, and you're following the pain because pain equals adhesion. So pain basically becomes your roadmap. But it's not like we're adding pain to the body.

We're making you aware of the pain that's deeper than what you're consciously aware of. And then as soon as you get in position, because the pressure fibers are larger than the pain fibers, suddenly that pain signal becomes like a good pain.

And we teach you that your breath is your guide. Of course, we don't want to put people in situations where they're in so much pain that they can't heal in the proper way.

And the rule is, as long as you're breathing in a relaxed way, you're feeding and healing the tissue. If anything hurts so much, it takes that relaxed breath away.

That's your body saying, no, I'm not ready for this. And then we have alternate ways of allowing you to get deeper in through those layers over time. Yeah.

So it's kind of like a guided almost like a guided self-massage in a way. and you talk about obviously decompression and how things are get congested.

What are your thoughts on like inversion tables or things that help to traction or open up discs, ligaments, you know, different things like that. I think they're wonderful.

And in fact, when I was in my yoga teacher training, I remember reading, I think it was the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali where they said, one of the best gifts we can give our body is to invert for up to ten minutes a day, because all of the blood, especially in the heck, has to fight gravity to get there.

So that inversion is a lovely thing. However, inversion alone isn't going to release those deep adhesions, so there's definitely benefit. But when you combine the of decompression with basically any other modality, then you're going to be able to get that energy, get that, supplement nutrition or whatever it is to the cells that are lacking in the moment.

Yeah, it's good to know. And what's the difference between the block therapy and going to perhaps a massage therapist that, you know, will get in and kind of do some deep tissue work.

So I initially developed fluid isometrics long before block therapy. So fluid isometrics was a technique that I learned through my hands how to navigate the deeper layers of adhesion.

So again, if you're getting, a treatment where you're stroking the surface, you'll get improved circulation to the surface, but that won't get deeper.

So can I show what the tools look like? Yeah, yeah. So these are what the blocks look like. We have one size the block body and then a smaller one the block baby.

They're made either from bamboo or wood because we want to use something similar in density to bone. So there's a lot of like facial rollers and things out there where you're rolling.

And they might be made of a more porous material, but in order to be able to navigate against through those layers to get to the bone, we need something similar in density to that. So if you're doing fluid isometrics, basically, block

therapy is the self-care version of fluid isometrics.

Using a fashion roller, for example, would be fluid. Isometrics is is a form. It's like a massage therapy form using rollers and and things like that using tools.

Oh no, it's using hands I mean hands. Okay. How do you split isometrics. Yes. And then the therapy becomes the, self-care version for people to do selves.

Why the Feet and Foundation Matter

that's that's really good to know as well. And how does that impact the organ systems. Right. Because typically when people are thinking about massage or, you know, any sort of kind of body therapy, they're typically thinking of pain reducing inflammation, just kind of feeling better, feeling lighter.

But how how does that actually impact the organ systems? Oh, it's lovely. And in fact, the very first position that we teach, no matter what area of the body we're making a focus, is the belly position, where we have you lying on the tool, right on the belly button for three minutes as you breathe into the tool.

So again, if people have been breathing through the muscles of the upper chest for years or decades, it takes a little bit of training. Even though we were born to breathe diaphragm, we also have to teach the body how to remember to do that.

So again, that pressure over time, as you're breathing, it starts to heat up the contents inside the abdomen. And again, we've got so much inflammation in the abdominal cavity from again incorrect sitting I mean here we have let me just bring this down.

So here's our stomach organs. So if I've been sitting like this for, you know, in front of my computer for a number of hours and I'm eating food and I'm not using this muscle to create this heating in through here, everything becomes again stagnant.

And before I started this journey, I was 50 pounds overweight and struggling with anxiety, depression, and I was dieting. I was reducing calories, I was working out like a fiend, and yet I was getting more compressed and more ballooned and more toxic.

So very frustrating when you're actually doing what you think is the correct thing to do. And then it was when I was having an anxiety attack that this whole journey began for me, because in that moment I actually thought I was going to die.

I was frozen in fear and I couldn't find my breath. And for some reason, I intuitively drove my hand into my belly. Now, up until that moment, I had been an athletic therapist for years, always focused on deep tissue work, but working people's backs and legs and necks.

And I was very familiar with what scar tissue felt like. However, this was the area that I stored so much of my weight I hated that part of my body, so I never touched it.

So here I am. I'm diving in here and the first thing I encounter is pain. But the pain brought me back to my breath and I'm like, okay, I'm breathing.

And then as I started intuitively exploring with my hands, I realized it felt marbled with what felt like scar tissue. Even though I hadn't had any injury or surgery in this area.

So after 30 minutes of exploring in the tissue, I felt really calm. I woke up the next day a little tender, but excited to get back to it just because it felt so good to feel calm, which was not my norm.

And then after the second evening of doing that similar work, when I stood up, I felt taller and I went and I looked at

myself in the mirror, and I literally began to cry because I had been working for years, especially to try to lose that size in my belly.

And now in two days, it was already starting to change. So as I continued to do this work over the years, I was getting deeper and deeper and I recognized that, you know, I was heating up all of that stagnant inflammation.

And then things started to move out of the body. I was digesting better. My liver was functioning better, my skin was improving, elimination all of those things through heating up that area, melting those adhesions deep within.

And when I first started again, I was like using my hands. So on my myself or my clients, I could feel the changes in the tissue. And then again, to teach people the self-care version where literally you're simply lying on this tool and activating your breath as you slowly start to search through those layers.

It's fascinating the changes that can happen. And it was about a year ago. there's a woman in New York that has a thermography. She has thermography images, and she took a before photo of a client.

And then two months after she had been blocking, she did a follow up photo. She said she's never seen anything so dramatic. The change in the inflammation in her gut was, was was mind blowing to her because it was just so, so efficient at getting rid of that.

Yeah. When you break up those adhesions and you get increased circulation and really open up all the drainage and detoxification pathways, it's just so important how it can affect everything in your system.

Right. And and typically if you're dealing with chronic inflammation or, mental health issues, you know, anxiety, depression, things like you were talking about.

Yeah, there's there's a back up there, there is there's, there's congestion and, lack of the ability to detox effectively. So, yeah, this can be really powerful.

Plus, you're stimulating endorphins, which most people in our society are not getting enough of, which have a natural pain relieving effect. They make you feel good.

They stimulate positive neurotransmitters. So, you know, kind of like effects of exercise, right? Most people feel a lot better, you know, whenever they test exercise, against a antidepressant, exercise always wins by a lot.

Right. And so you're kind of getting the effects of exercise from that perspective. You're getting a lot of other additional benefits. But from the endorphin perspective, kind know without, you know, actually exercising.

So yeah, a lot of great great effects there. Let's talk about it like you had talked about how you look at the feet and you want to get to kind of the root cause.

Is the feet kind of the first place you're looking at along with the breath? It's the first place. Absolutely. And it's lovely. our community is so female centered.

And a few months back, this gentleman, 73 years old, his name is Walter Cowles. We've done some interviews with him that he shared. He posted a before and after picture in my community group of the changes that he had in his face after doing my 30 day upper body program two months prior, I actually had a challenge, which he didn't do.

Had he done it then he would have absolutely won. But then he was also sharing what he was doing with his father's feet, his father's 102 years old. And in one of my programs, I call it the Pronated Corrector program.

I teach people how to release between the toes with their fingers holding for three minutes.

Getting Started with Block Therapy

And if you do it, you'll certainly encounter lots of pain. So he I, I had him come out and I did an interview with him and it was fascinating. But he sent me a video the other day.

He's been doing this for three months, every day to his father. He didn't think his father would ever get out of, the chair, again or be able to walk.

His legs were really inflamed. That ready? Look, his feet were size ten when initially they were a size eight. And he said if you moved his foot around, it would basically move like one solid unit all the way up to the hip.

He showed me the video the other day. His dad now is, you know, moving his feet completely independently. His feet are now that size eight skin color looks great.

And he's motoring around his house on his feet. He's also improved his, sleep as well as his, increase in eating. So just fascinating. And I Domino results.

And that's a good sign. At 102 years old. That's a sign that, you know, no matter how old you are, you can get a lot of improvement here. Yes. And that literally was really just the work between the feet.

So now he's doing more stuff. But, we've had so many people doing that alone and just sharing the incredible benefits. One woman said, just from the breathing, the foot work.

And then I also share, you know, between the fingers as well. If you do this for three minutes, we need joint. You're going to reap pattern. What's going on in the upper body?

Because if you see how most people stand, their palms face the back, where if you look at that skeleton, anatomical position is palms forward. So I always teach people when you're walking, turn those palms forward, it lifts the ribcage, it opens up the lymphatic area.

But again, this being, you know, the most frozen along with the feet because they're the furthest from the edge. And these holding patterns, like if I have a frozen shoulder and I don't release the the wrist in the hand, I'm not going to do a lot to release this negative holding pattern in the shoulder.

So she shared, as soon as she started doing that, her hair stopped falling out. Her hands and her feet, which had been cold for decades, were no longer cold.

So it's really fascinating by just doing some simple little things, how much change you can make when you start addressing the body from that perspective of melting adhesions and re patterning the fascia.

So after I have people do that, I always say that. And then you want to stand up and you want to grip the toes and you want have your knees slightly bent because most people hyperextended at their knees.

And that's what creates such a wasting of the pelvis, which will impact how we breathe, and so on and so on. So when we can actually grip the toes into the floor after we've released them and start to bring that spring back into your step, now you're not dealing with flat tires anymore.

You've pumped up the feet so that they can guide you through life, and you can navigate the direction that your feet are going. Instead of having these solid clubs that we're basically walking on with very little awareness of what's happening.

Yeah, sounds like your program is doing really great work. And so how do people get started with your program? What does that look like? You said you mentioned you had a 30 day upper body program.

What are the different options and how do people, get started and what does it look like. So the starter program itself is we're actually just going to be changing it right now.

It's nine classes. in about a month or so, it's going to be 12 classes where we basically have you cycle through the body in general, and we always start core in rib cage because again, we really want to make you aware of your breath, and we want you to open that breath so that you intuitively and internally become your own healing machine.

And then there we have a membership with a number of different guided programs. And for people that are basically after the starter program, we say, you know, we really need to get you into that foundation piece because even if you're dealing with a frozen shoulder or migraines, if you do a whole bunch of upper body work, but you haven't changed the foundation, you're going to continue to get pulled back in.

So there's most efficient ways to go about the process. And we have a lovely community group, and people are connected to me, and I come live with the community frequently to give guidance along the way.

Depending on the situation. But I think one of my most favorite programs, which is new as of December, I took 13 members of my community through a concussion protocol, and I also added in facial decompression for the eyes.

And we also have a hair health class, which teaches you how to release the scalp from the skull. And every single one of those people in all of the categories we were tracking had improvement.

So, I really like that program because it is a full body. We don't just work up through here. We do work foundations through the hands. And in order again to change the patterning of the fashion, your whole body.

Now sounds really interesting. And people can find that at blocktherapy.com. Is that correct. Blocktherapy.com. Yeah. Well fantastic Deanna you're doing great work.

Final Advice and Free Resources

And, you know, there's this kind of information that people need to know and need to hear that you don't have to age and kind of, you know, get all the postural changes and, and, you know, all the restrictions that, that most people in our society, unfortunately, because they don't know this information or are dealing with and, you know, you can age gracefully, lower inflammation, improve your overall mental health, organ function, improve overall circulation to all systems of the body, increasing your energy.

Mitochondrial function, you know, really with with simple techniques to release the fascia and, make sure the body's in balance. So real powerful stuff.

Any any last words of inspiration here for our audience? Well, we have a free gift for everybody so that they can really dive in and understand fascia.

Plus, we have a nine day, series where we teach you using a rolled up towel so you can start right away. You don't have to wait and decide if you want to make a commitment to the actual program.

the towel itself, because you can roll it up and make it really nice and dense. It really does do a lot. And along with the teaching, you start to see right away and you have that understanding of fascia decompression in your own body.

But no matter where you are, just like 102 year old, it doesn't matter what you're starting with. When you start to turn on your body's internal engine and you start to understand how to undo the patterning of unconscious living, you really can turn things around.

And I believe that there is no situation. And as long as a person is conscious enough, that can't be improved to a large degree. So, it doesn't matter.

Again, age, man, woman, whatever level of health you're at, simply by starting and understanding the breathwork, it's it's really the key. Perfect. Well, thank you so much for your time, Deanna. Guys, check her out.

Blocktherapy.com. Check out her programs and her free gift there as well. And we'll see you all in a future interview. Be blessed.