

The Total Training Company

Muscle Activation Techniques (MAT)

Explanation for Health Care Providers

Muscle Activation Techniques is a very specific, non-medical process with a narrow application to the assessment, improvement and maintenance of a targeted aspect of human motor control – a muscle’s contractile efficiency.

Despite MAT’s narrow scope of practice, focusing on muscle system contractile capabilities, this process and its outcomes should not be minimized nor their potency overlooked or underestimated. MAT is an important process for anyone who recognizes the significance of the muscular system for the maintenance and improvement of overall health and fitness. These strategies are a unique and important contribution to the general field of assessing and improving an individual’s physical capabilities to engage in, sustain physical activity, and improve human performance.

These techniques / strategies are:

- 1) Comparative Mobility Assessment
- 2) Active Muscle Contract and Sustain Assessment
- 3) Digital Force Application to Muscle Attachment Tissues

The Comparative Mobility Assessment is a specific force application leading to the measurement of active or passive limb motion from a designated start position, through a designated plane, to the end of limb motion. This measurement is then compared to the mirror image limb motion for the limb on the other side of the body. Any asymmetry may indicate the potential of inhibited tissue that may need to be activated.

The Active Muscle Contract and Sustain Assessment is a force application, of a specific magnitude and rate, set up and delivered by the MAT specialist, that assesses the muscle’s ability to react and meet that force.

It is not a muscle “break” test, or a manual muscle test used as an indication of the body’s response to a chemical substance.

The Digital Force Application to Muscle Attachment Tissues is a specific force application to the body tissue using the practitioner’s fingers. Direct pressure applied perpendicular to muscle attachment tissues (tendons, aponeuroses) creating subtle tension on the attachment tissues for a duration of 1 – 4 seconds. It is a process of initiating tension, releasing and re-initiating tension, moving along the length of the target muscle attachment. This subtle tension when applied correctly in conjunction with the Active Muscle Contract and Sustain Assessment will activate inhibited tissue.

It is not a soft tissue manipulation to release trigger points, adhesions, or move body fluids to and from tissue sites. It is not Active Release Technique (A.R.T.)