

Issue 28: October 2016 | Endurance Sports



INTERCARE HEALTHCARE CENTERS INC: MAKING THE BEST OF BOTH TREATMENT WORLDS

The crux of their services combines complementary and alternative therapeutic methods. Dr. Martin Camara, clinic director of Intercare Healthcare Center, Inc. refers to it as integrated medicine.

"In the 80s or 90s, traditional approaches such as acupuncture and massages were not professionalized and were not convenient. What we realized when we opened in 1993 and as we specialized in natural, drugless, non-surgical forms of therapy, was that there was no professional integrated medicine healthcare service in the Philippines and in so many other countries. A patient with a condition would have to go to Chinatown for acupuncture, and then to a spa for a massage, and then a hospital for physical therapy. What we did was to put all these services together and professionalize them in one location," he says.

WHAT IT IS Integrative medicine is a fusion of traditional practices such as acupuncture, chiropractic, massage, and Pilates designed to address health issues, particularly chronic pain. "We have discovered that certain approaches can only go so far with patients. The best approach is to integrate several treatments so we can offer a more comprehensive approach in addressing problems of our patients, treating conditions that are skeletal, or with the joints,

recovery for recurring issues.

The integrated service is the first of its kind in the Philippines and in a lot of places in the world, and there is a great need for what they do. According to him, low back pain affects four out of five people worldwide. Cardiac conditions may be the number one concern for healthcare, but orthopedic pain and musculoskeletal conditions that affect the way of life are a close second.

HOW IT WORKS Treatment starts with a consultation, where a workup might even include the taking of photographs of to check how the patient's body is aligned. "We have a physical evaluation of problem, where we talk about the pain and where it hurts when standing or sitting. If there has already been an MRI or an X-ray, we look at it in relation to posture. We do a history and evaluation and from there come up with a working diagnosis of what we think the problem is and what we can do to get rid of it."

"There's a concept in medicine called cumulative microtrauma where small insignificant pain adds up over the weeks, months, and years to lead up to a bigger injury. For endurance athletes, plantar fasciitis is a common problem where they wake up one day and there is inflammation and pain that makes it difficult for them to step on their foot," he says. This does not happen overnight, he explains, as repetitive trauma on the body over long periods of time takes its toll on all the

to their condition. Intercare offers Myotherapy, a form of manual therapy which focuses on the rehabilitation of the musculoskeletal system. A clinical myotherapist makes an assessment on the areas of pain and restriction throughout the body. Then he applies manual therapy as a means to release this tension by putting pressure at trigger points.

Needles can also come into play. When used to treat specific sports injuries or different forms of pain, acupuncture can help by stimulating the nervous endings, muscles, and connective tissue, resulting in proper blood flow, decreasing pain-related symptoms. Dry Needling is a valuable, effective and efficient adjunct treatment to inactivate myofascial trigger points. A thin solid filament sterile needle is inserted in the myofascial trigger point to produce a local twitch response. This local twitch response then releases the shortened bands of muscle fibers, resulting in muscle relaxation and pain relief.

Another popular service is Chiropractic, to help improve conditions such as low back pain, slipped disc, neck and shoulder pain, carpal tunnel and sports injuries. These approaches fit very well with modern approaches in sports medicine, and he has been on the board of consultants for Filipino national athletes training for the Olympics. "It is a perfect fit for athletes who are looking for treatments that are natural, drugless, and non-surgical management of pain."

THEY'VE TRIED IT, AND IT WORKS

THREE ENDURANCE SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS SHARE THE TREATMENTS THAT WORKED IN ALLEVIATING THEIR CHRONIC PAIN.



FRANK LACSON, 52
@FrankLacsonCoach

THE GOAL I go to Intercare for monthly maintenance. I do heavy mileage in training over time. I need core alignment. I haven't had a major injury before so this is also for injury prevention.

HOW DID YOU HEAR OF INTERCARE? Intercare has been active in events, races, and expos, so that's how I discovered them.

THE FIXES Myotherapy and Chiropractic. It's a kind of core alignment manipulation of the spine. This procedure balances the forces that allows you to move: the muscles, bones, and all that. Being balanced and aligned allows the body to perform optimally and prevent injuries.

RESULTS As Doc Martin (Camara) said, all these things are related to our movement—bones, the fascia, the muscles, and the coordination of your muscles. I just did Ironman Taiwan a month ago (October), so

PHOTO: (TOP) INTERCARE HEALTHCARE CENTERS INC.; (MIDDLE) INTERCARE HEALTHCARE CENTERS INC.

View original article in <http://www.endurance.ph/issues/issue-27-september-2016-2>