

Fascia:

“What we should know”

Part 2 of a 3 part series

By: David Noonan; BA, PTA

Part 1 of this series introduced us to the misunderstood and largely ignored connective tissue system of the body known as the fascial system. Over sixty years of research was reviewed that revealed the complete integration of the human body through the fascial system; an uninterrupted, contractile, dynamic, adaptive and electrically active tissue. Part Two of this series will delve ever more deeply into the complete integration of the human body through the pioneering work of Dr. Jean-Claude Guimberteau.

It has become evident that there exists a tapestry of tissue, a “web of life”, that creates the whole and complete human being that is currently reading this article. While our high school and college biology and health courses have taught us about the separate systems of the body: cardiovascular, musculoskeletal and neurological, to name a few; it has fostered an erroneous model of the human body that is at odds with the experience of a “life in total” that we possess. While these structures are important to our understanding of health, wellness and disease; they are incomplete due to the concept of separateness that is inherently assumed in the current systems model. Conversely, over sixty years of research on the fascial system clearly indicates a model that reflects complete integration of a dynamic, adaptive and electrically active tissue that is involved in every aspect of life. Further, rather than understanding the human body and its disparate systems as connected *by* the fascial system; it would be closer to the reality of the situation, to state that all the structures of the human body exist *within* the fascial matrix; that we are, in essence, fascial beings. To pose this concept in another way, would you say that the atmosphere that we breathe and live in on Earth connects us or that we exist within it? A small distinction, but an important one.

It is an accepted scientific fact that the fascial system is an uninterrupted tissue that weaves its way through the body; surrounding, protecting and interpenetrating every single structure of the human body, down to the very cells themselves. The magnitude of this concept is lost within our current model, with the fascial system being relegated to the role of glorified packing material. While research has been performed that contradicts this model, it has often been ignored or overlooked, due to the difficulty in envisioning such a paradigm-shifting concept. Recent research performed by French hand and plastic surgeon Dr. Jean-Claude Guimberteau (www.guimberteau-jc-md.com) provides profound visual support to assist us in updating our model of the human body.

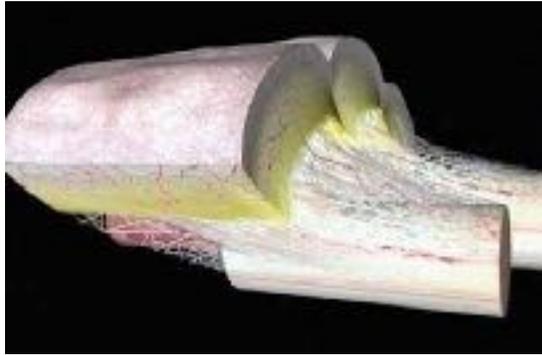
Through endoscopic filming of living fascial tissue (pictured on right), Dr. Guimberteau has provided irrefutable evidence to support the model of complete integration. In several volumes of DVD's, Dr. Guimberteau reveals the complete integration of the human body, from the outer layer of skin (*The Skin Excursion*), through the deeper layers of the dermis (*Interior Architectures*), the bundles of muscle fibers (*Muscle Attitudes*) down to the deepest bone and blood vessels. While these films deal specifically with certain “layers”, Dr. Guimberteau reveals his theoretical model of integration in the film *Strolling under the Skin*, released in 2005. The fact of complete integration is reiterated again and again within all of Dr. Guimberteau's films. To illustrate this, some of the narrator's more poignant statements follow:

- *The observation, in vivo, required the existence of a tissue continuum, rather than layers of sliding structures.*
- *Not only could the tendons move independently of each other through this sliding system, but organs could do the same, so the system was common to the whole organism.*
- *There was a continuity between the sheets and tendons despite the distension created with flexion... simplistic mechanistic actions could no longer account for this phenomena.*
- *This tissue anchors the muscles and tendons and could be their main constituent material.*
- *The tissue continuum is total.*



- *The human body would seem to be one and the same tissue that has differentiated over time but whose basic organization is stereotyped.*

Dr. Guimberteau’s landmark research reveals an even deeper and more complex connectedness created by the fascial system; a connectedness that overthrows some of the more fundamental concepts that medicine has taken for granted. For instance, Guimberteau reveals that “the system is common to the whole organism”, “the tissue could be their [muscle and tendon] main constituent material” and “the human body would seem to be one and the same tissue”. These three statements support the hypothesis that all of our organ systems exist within the fascial system, much like we exist within Earth’s atmosphere, or drops of rain exist in the ocean. This distinction alters the



way in which we must approach health as well as dysfunction; an injury can no longer be in one area of the body and not be reflected through the whole. We can no longer rely on surgeries and injections to “fix” one section of the body while ignoring the entirety. We can no longer pay lip service to the term “holistic”, but must realize it to be the only reality.

Inner Circle’s specialization and expertise with Myofascial Release and our creation and utilization of The Four Phase allow us to approach the body in its entirety, as Dr. Guimberteau’s research reveals we must. Don’t continue to be plagued with “quick fixes” that never seem to help you heal or relieve the pain that won’t abate. Envision what it would feel

like if you could change your condition, if you could be pain-free, if you could heal? Step into that vision today.

Part Three of this series will focus on the hands-on therapy known as Myofascial Release, as developed by John F. Barnes, PT, and how its principles are supported by the sixty years of research reviewed by Parts 1 & 2.

References

- Interior Architectures*. (2012). [DVD] France: Endovivo Productions
- Muscle Attitudes*. (2010). [DVD] France: Endovivo Productions
- Strolling Under the Skin* (2005). [DVD] France: Endovivo Productions
- The Skin Excursion* (2010). [DVD] France: Endovivo Productions