



Don't Add Strength

to Dysfunction

Contents

Movement Patterns	3
Dysfunction	6
Don't Add Strength to a Dysfunction	8
What You Need To Do	9
After the Assessment Screen	10

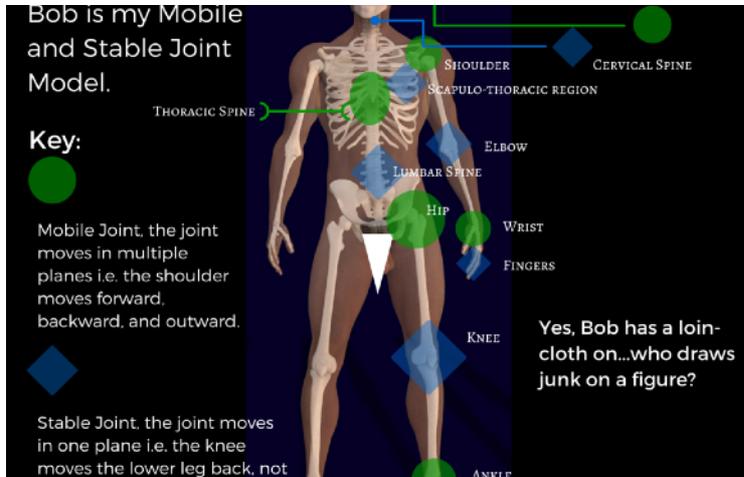


Movement Patterns

“If you have a dysfunctional movement pattern, adding weight to that movement pattern will make the dysfunction worse.”

Movement is dictated by muscles and joints.

Your body has evolved, or if you wish, been created, to articulate in particular patterns. Some joints move in many directions with a lot of freedom, others, only bend one way and with little deviation.



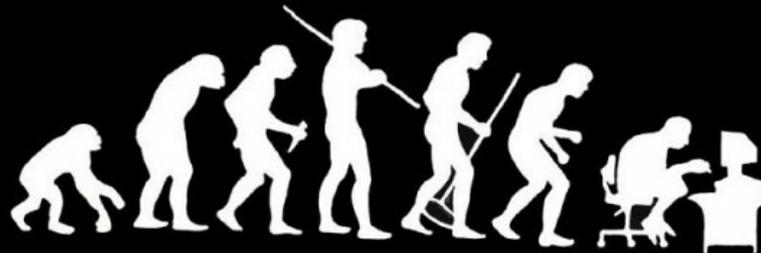
I have written a post on [mobility & stability patterns](#) that explains how your joints should move and rotate.

There is an alternating pattern of mobile & stable joints. Mobile joints can rotate, think wrists, and stable joints move only in one plane, like your elbows.

This concept is important to movement patterns.

What is a Movement Pattern?

Primary movement patterns are used in daily life and they're the basis of golf conditioning exercises. Primary movement patterns are compound movements (use multiple joints and muscles), that should be familiar to us, as we use them everyday as we move through life. There are 7 primary movement patterns.



Something, somewhere went terribly wrong

Primary Movement Patterns

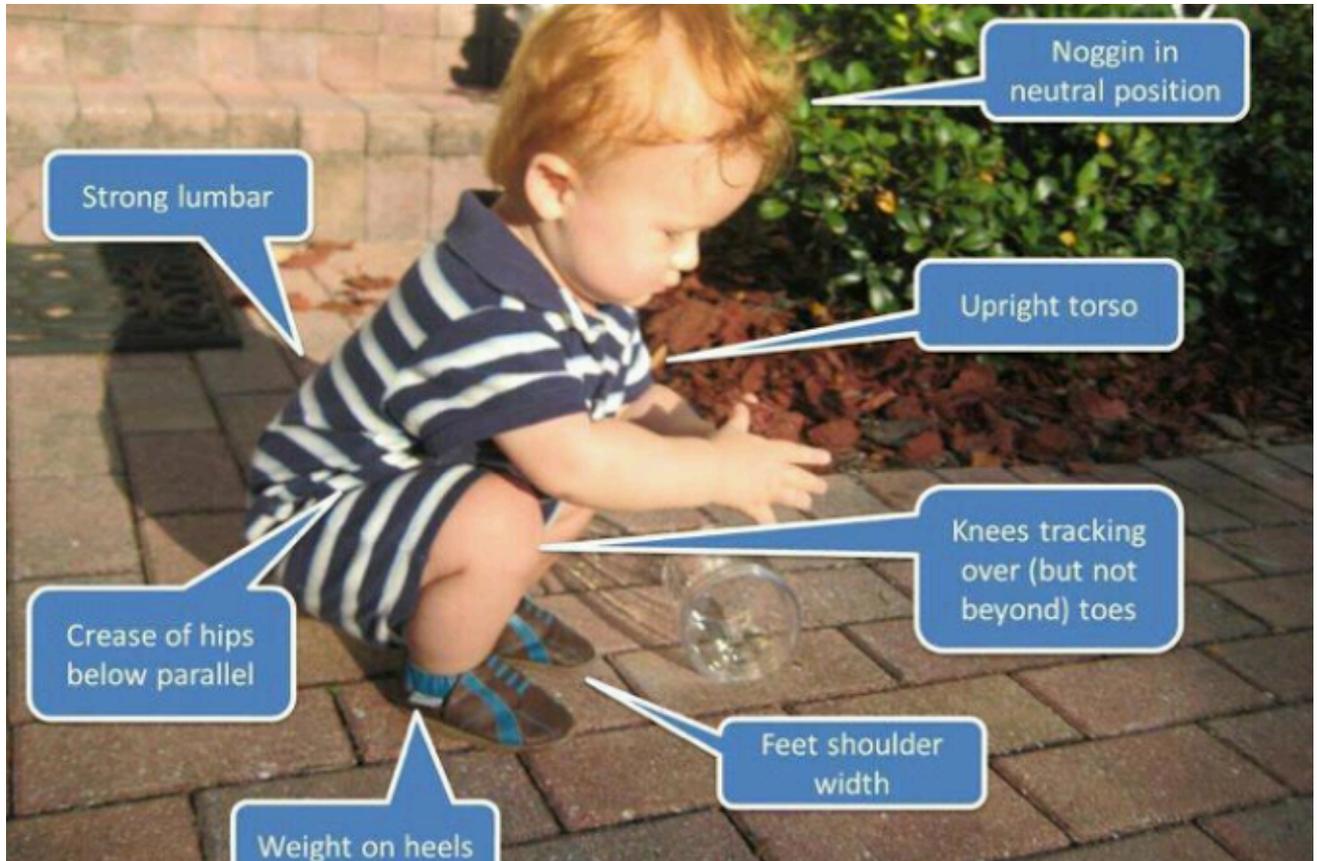
1. Gait (walking & running)
2. Squatting
3. Lunging
4. Pulling
5. Pushing
6. Pressing (overhead)
7. Rotating (twisting)

When we're born, we have little to no control over any movement patterns. The most we can do as babies is flail our arms and legs...and of course scream.

But eventually we learn to control the muscles that move our joints, we learn to roll over, lift our head, crawl, sit, stand, and eventually walk and manipulate objects. For many of us, this is the only time in life that we have perfect movement patterns and full range of motion of our joints.

After the toddler stage it's all downhill. Yes, we add strength, but we also pick up bad movement habits. Some of these are caused by injuries, others by repetitive actions forming imbalances, or we lose mobility when we don't use one or more of the primary movement patterns. Our increasingly sedentary lifestyle reduces the opportunities we have to use all of the primary movement patterns that our ancestors used everyday in order to stay alive.

As toddlers our movement patterns are perfect. We have the ability to move as designed without even thinking about it.



But as we get older our bodies change, we get hurt and never stop compensating for that injury, our jobs make us use the same muscles for hours at a time, we find ourselves sitting behind a desk (like I am now) with our shoulders shrugged and our legs all but hanging there without moving, we sit in a car for hours or we watch TV shows one after another without moving except to get a snack during the commercials.

Our lifestyle choices stop us from practicing all of the primary movement patterns and we lose range of motion, mobility, flexibility, and often we even lose the ability to activate and use our muscles when they should be used to move. Instead, we compensate by using other muscles that we do have control over as the others become weaker.

These compensations and lack of control along with poor mechanics are called Dysfunctions.

Dysfunction

Dysfunction simply means a part of the body that does not work normally, often interchangeable used with the term limitation, which is the restriction of movement or range of motion.

When the body doesn't move as it's designed we say there's a dysfunction. I use the term dysfunction and limitation more or less interchangeably even though there is a technical difference.

I use the word limitation to define a particular movement restriction. "Your hip has an external rotation limitation" while I in general I would say "Your hip rotation is dysfunctional".

Either way, limitation or dysfunction means that your body isn't moving as it should. It can be an issue with your range of motion caused by a muscle shortening that isn't allowing your joints to move as they should; or it could be a stability issue, where the muscles that should be holding a joint stable (holding the joint still) aren't working properly and thus allowing the joint to move or twist.



The left drawing shows how the knee is inline with the center of the body and foot while running. This is a strong position to absorb force and provide power.

In the right drawing, the knee is bent inward or is valgus. This is not a strong position. This dysfunction will lead to pain and eventually to other physical problems.

Below is an example from Bret Contreras's website of a woman with her knees caving in either while squatting or landing a jump off the box.



One would think this is a knee dysfunction. But it isn't, the knee is compensating for other parts of the body. The knees need to bend inward to support the force of landing, or carrying the weight because of several possible reasons. Such as, the glutes might be weak, or the muscles that rotate the hip outward might be tight. Her ankles might be tight and lack mobility. And it's also possible that her quads and/or hamstrings aren't strong enough to support the force of her landing.

Guess what part of her body will hurt...that's right, her knees. This is often the case when a part of the body compensates for another. In this case, the knee isn't the issue, in fact, they helped her stay upright and not crash to the floor after jumping or while holding the weight.

When you have joint pain often the joint that is hurting is the joint that compensated for another. The solution to the pain is to fix the issue with the joint or the muscles that control the joint above or below the one that hurts.

Don't Add Strength to a Dysfunction

Let's use the woman in the last section as an example. What do you suppose would happen if she decided to weight train?

Out of the blue, she decides to get into shape. She goes to the gym and does some back squats.



Back squats are perfect right? Strengthen the glutes and hammies. Just what she needs.

But she doesn't have good form like the woman shown in this image, instead, her knees buckle inward.

What would the outcome be?

She would be training the dysfunction. She would be strengthening a bad habit.

The title of this guide is a quote from Grey Cook. Cook is a proponent of correcting limitations and dysfunctions before starting a weight training program.

“If you have a dysfunctional movement pattern, adding weight to that movement pattern will make the dysfunction worse.”

Using the woman again for an example, if her knees cave in during a squat because her glutes are weak and her ankles are tight, those problems will only worsen if she strength trains those parts of her body.

It may hurt your ego to go to the gym and laying off the weights to focus on mobility and stability, but it will be your best course of action to correct movement dysfunction and prevent future injury.

What You Need To Do

“If You’re Not Assessing, You’re Only Guessing”

Have a Titleist Performance Institute Fitness Professional Screen You.

What is the Titleist Performance Institute?

TPI is the world's leading educational organization dedicated to the study of how the human body functions in relation to the golf swing.

TPI has studied thousands of golfers ranging from the top professional tour players to weekend players. From these players an enormous amount of data has been collected from people of all shapes, sizes, ages, and fitness levels.

Analyzing these data, TPI discovered how a properly functioning body allows a player to swing a golf club in the most efficient way possible. They have figured out how physical limitations can adversely affect the golf swing and potentially lead to injury.

The top professional golfers undergo TPI assessment screens, and the same screens are available for you to utilize.

Why Assessment Screening is Important

There are rather in an infinite number of swing styles. But, TPI fitness professionals do believe there is one efficient way for every player to swing and it is based on what the player can physically do.

Therefore, the most efficient swing is not the same for every golfer, because efficiency is unique to their body. To achieve an efficient swing, a golfer must first be screened. This screen involves an assessment of swing mechanics and biomechanics, physical fitness, movement quality, current health and a client history.

Once this screen is completed, the results are used to create a plan specifically for that golfer. The plan may include fitness training, physical therapy and treatment, coaching of swing mechanics and biomechanics, nutrition, mental strategy or all of the above.

After the Assessment Screen

The TPI Assessment Screen will evaluate your mobility & stability and provide you will corrective exercises to reduce and eliminate any limitations that are causing you harmful dysfunctions.

Once the dysfunctions are gone you can now add weight to your workouts to build strength and power to your golf swing.

Here's how an ideal golf conditioning program should be set up.

1. Get assessed and screened
2. Complete corrective exercises to eliminate limitations and dysfunctions
3. Use weight and resistive training to strengthen your body
4. Add speed to the workouts to increase your power output

I think it's great that you want to become stronger and become more fit so you can play better golf.

But it's important to be assessed and screened before you start adding weights to your workouts.

If you do have some limitations it's better to correct them before adding weight to a dysfunction.

So first how do you get yourself screened? Well, contact me at todd@toddmarsfitness.com and I can set up a remote assessment and screen for you. I can also find your closest TPI fitness professional if you would like to be screened in person.

To help those that want to do it yourself, I'm also writing a series of articles explaining how to do the screens. Links to all of the screens can be found in this article [Put the Horse in Front of the Cart and Get With the Fitness Program](#).

The articles explaining the screens are listed at the bottom of that post.

[Click to Learn More](#)