

## Graston Technique® is Based on Research

Graston Technique® (GT) is a soft tissue diagnostic and therapeutic method that has been used in outpatient clinics since 1994. GT instruments – made of stainless steel, specifically designed and developed as an alternative to manual transverse friction massage – are used as an aid in the diagnosis and treatment of soft tissue pathology and dysfunction. The instruments provide diagnostic tactile feedback to both the clinician and the patient, as the instruments act as a focused extension of the clinician's own hands.

GISTM research, initially conducted at Ball Memorial Hospital and Ball State University, includes an *in vitro* rat tendon injury model showing that GISTM significantly activates fibroblasts to both replicate and synthesize.(1, 2) Thus, GISTM increases the amount of fibroblasts and the quantity of collagen deposited, which should speed healing of dense connective tissue like tendon and ligament. The rate of activation is proportional to the force applied to the tendon.(1)

Clinical experience has shown that Graston Technique® is of benefit in the management of a large variety of musculoskeletal disorders. These include: carpal

tunnel syndrome, cervical pain, deQuervain's syndrome, epicondylitis, fibromyalgia, IT band syndrome, joint sprain, lower back pain, muscle strain, painful scar, plantar fasciitis, post fracture pain and tendinitis.(3-6) A large case series found that Graston Technique® reduces numbness, increases patient functional capabilities both in ADLs, and work related function.(7)

A 2009 research report in JOSPT shows instrument-assisted cross-fiber treatment "accelerates" healing and knee ligaments were 43% stronger with use of instrument-assisted cross-fiber massage.(8)

### Summary

- Graston Technique® is both a diagnostic and therapeutic method
- Stainless steel instruments are used to focus treatment forces and improve diagnostic ability
- Graston Technique® has been effective in the treatment of: carpal tunnel syndrome, cervical pain, de Quervain's syndrome, epicondylitis, fibromyalgia, IT band syndrome, joint sprain, lower back pain, muscle strain, painful scar, plantar fasciitis, post fracture pain and tendonitis(7)

- 
1. Gehlsen GM, Ganion LR, Helfst R. Fibroblast responses to variation in soft tissue mobilization pressure. *Med Sci Sports Exerc* 1999;31(4):531-5.
  2. Davidson C, Ganion L, Gehlsen G, Verhoestra B, Roepke J, Sevier T. Rat tendon morphologic and functional changes resulting from soft tissue mobilization. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise* 1997;29(3):313-9.
  3. Earley BL, Carey MT, Hall A. The Graston Technique of Instrument-assisted Soft Tissue Mobilization. In: AOTA Annual Conference and Exposition; 2000 March 30 - April 2; Seattle, WA; 2000.
  4. Sevier TL, Wilson JK. Treating lateral epicondylitis. *Sports Med* 1999;28(5):375-80.
  5. Carey MT, Ploski M, Sweney L. The Graston Technique of Soft Tissue Mobilization. In: APTA Combined Sections Meeting; 1999 February 3-7; Seattle, WA; 1999.
  6. Melham TJ, Sevier TL, Malnofski MJ, Wilson JK, Helfst RH, Jr. Chronic ankle pain and fibrosis successfully treated with a new noninvasive augmented soft tissue mobilization technique (ASTM): a case report. *Med Sci Sports Exerc* 1998;30(6):801-4.
  7. Perle SM, Perry DG, Carey MT. Effects of Graston Technique on Soft Tissue Conditions: A Prospective Case Series. In: WFC's 7th Biennial Congress; 2003; Orlando, FL: World Federation of Chiropractic; 2003.
  8. Loghamani MT, Warden SJ. Instrument-Assisted Cross-Fiber Massage Accelerates Knee Ligament Healing. In: *Journal of Orthopaedic & Sports Physical Therapy*; 2009 July; 506-15