

# MTP-MAT

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07-16-2024

## Summary:

MTP-MAT, or Myofascial Trigger Point Muscle Activation Techniques, is a hands-on modality designed to enhance muscle strength, stability, and mobility by improving the neurofeedback communication between the brain and muscles.

- **Purpose and Benefits:** MTP-MAT aims to increase contractile capability in muscles that are not efficiently contracting, thus preventing loss of motion and potential injury. It is beneficial for physical rehabilitation and can help reduce joint injuries related to instability and overuse.<sup>12</sup>
- **Protective Mechanism:** When the body senses instability, muscles tighten as a protective mechanism. This can be seen in everyday scenarios like sitting for long hours or walking on ice, where the body restricts motion to protect itself from injury.<sup>34</sup>
- **Modality Overview:** MTP-MAT is a personalized technique that assesses and addresses individual muscular imbalances by enhancing the connection between the brain and muscles, making it effective for people of all ages and lifestyles.<sup>56</sup>
- **Assessment Process:** The process begins with understanding the client's capabilities, challenges, and goals. The first session includes a discussion about specific issues and a physical assessment to identify muscular weaknesses and limitations in range of motion.<sup>78</sup>
- **Implementation:** Implementation of MTP-MAT varies widely based on individual needs. It is a non-invasive technique that requires frequent sessions initially, followed by a maintenance-based timeline to restore and maintain muscle strength and connectivity.<sup>910</sup>
- **Target Audience:** MTP-MAT is beneficial for everyone, from those looking to improve their physical fitness to those with mobility issues or muscular imbalances. It helps enhance stability, range of motion, and overall quality of life.<sup>1112</sup>
- **Additional Benefits:** Besides aiding recovery from injury, MTP-MAT helps reduce inflammation and creates a prime environment for healing by increasing stability. These benefits make it an appealing practice beyond rehabilitation.<sup>13</sup>

**Myofascial Trigger Point Muscle Activation Techniques**, or MTP-MAT, is a superset of Muscle Activation Therapy (MAT), used to help assess muscle strength, stability, and mobility.

MTP-MAT is also used to help increase contractile capability in muscles that are not “firing” (contracting) efficiently, therefore creating loss of motion within a body movement. This loss of motion can wreak havoc on the body, creating an environment for potential injury.

When the body senses instability, the muscles responsible for the movement pattern tighten to protect itself from injury.

A relatively relatable example of this is sitting in an office chair for 8-10 hours a day, this may lead to tightness in the lower back due to hip flexion weakness. By forcing your body in a hip flexed position by sitting for so long, muscles on the other side of the axis, i.e. back extensors, glutes, and hamstrings, will tighten to protect your system.

For example, walking on ice, “When we walk on ice, we have limitations in range of motion because your body is protecting itself. The natural neurological response is that when the body senses instability it tightens up as a protective mechanism. When you provide a sense of stability the body will give you all the mobility in the world; therefore, once the ice melts, your body has stability again and the protective mechanism goes away”. Myofascial Trigger & Muscle Activation Techniques are designed to help address and correct these muscular imbalances affecting people of all ages and lifestyles.

### **About the Modality**

MTP-MAT is a hands-on modality used to help strengthen the connection within inflicted muscles that are affecting a client’s movement. This is done by helping enhance the neurofeedback communication between the brain and the muscles that are failing to subconsciously contract on demand.

MTP-MAT is useful in physical rehabilitation because it targets and specifically strengthens muscles that may have been affected negatively due to stress, trauma, or overuse, thus causing impaired connection and reduced functionality.

When speaking about “weakness” or “strength” in relation to muscles and MTP-MAT, we are referring to the neurological response and reaction that the muscle has when contracting on demand. For instance, when a muscle is “weak”, it doesn’t necessarily mean that the muscle is weak in the classical or traditional sense, we mean that the muscle was unable to perform appropriately when

tested with its respected muscle test (i.e. failing to contract efficiently due to being stuck short).

MTP-MAT can be utilized in the physical fitness and wellness professions as a "checks and balances system" to help reduce joint injuries relating to instability and overuse. The goal of an MTP-MAT specialist is to maintain or even increase range of motion and create stability throughout the body. When the muscles are properly firing, the body feels stable, therefore creating more mobility.

### **How does MTP-MAT work?**

Myofascial Trigger Point Muscle Activation Techniques is a holistic approach that was designed to deal with the unique musculature of people on an individual basis instead of grouping clients based on generalities.

Given that each client has a different background (relating to past life experiences, injuries, stress levels, etc.), body structure (relating to height, weight, bone structure, etc.), abilities (i.e. a professional athlete vs an average adult), and age, it is best not to assume they will each require the same attention or have the same muscular imbalances.

MTP-MAT is a technique that is intended to be a much more personalized solution to a client's body issues and goals. This kind of close attention to the unique details of each client's body and lifestyle helps ensure that MTP-MAT is both highly efficient and effective.

Determining someone's abilities and areas of focus on a person-to-person basis achieves the goal of creating a truly lasting impact on their health and well-being. A Trigger Point and Muscle Activation Techniques session begins by assessing the abilities of a client's muscles to find where there are limitations in ranges of motion.

'Range of Motion' testing reveals what you can't do, is a clue to what's breaking you down".

After the Specialist understands where the client is experiencing muscular imbalances, they work to regain that connection by performing Myofascial Trigger Point releases and then Muscle Activation (MTP-MAT) on the of that inflicted muscle).

### **Myofascial Trigger Point Muscle Activation Assessment Process**

The process begins by understanding each person's starting capabilities, challenges, what they are hoping to achieve, and any issues they might be having.

The first session will likely include a basic explanation and discussion to see if the client is having specific issues they need addressed. This part of the assessment will also help the Practitioner get an idea about what kind of activities the client frequently engage in that might be relevant to their muscular issues or strength building goals. This will be when you, the MTP-MAT Specialist, will ask about any injuries the client may have sustained (both recently or in the past) and conditions they may have that could influence their muscular system.

It is important to note that MTP-MAT Practitioners do NOT treat pain, pain reduction is a potential benefit with implementing the modality regularly into the client's health and wellness plan.

The physical assessment of each client is equally important. An MTP-MAT Specialist will complete a series of Range of Motion (ROM) to find what motions are limited and indicate specific muscular weaknesses. Sometimes the source of a weakness or tightness is not immediately apparent.

The MTP-MAT processes explain how different muscles affect joint movements, tissues, and other muscles surrounding them and how compensations through movement can cause significant limitations in motion.

Knowing the relationship between muscles and movement helps to address the muscle system's role in chronic pain and understand the source of the issue to help bring back motion.

### **MTP-MAT Session Overview**

Informed, insightful decisions will need to be made about how to best address any issues that have been identified once the assessment has been completed.

For example, if the client is having muscular pain or discomfort around a specific joint, it may be due to overuse or compensation in relation to the muscles surrounding that joint. If one of the muscles stabilizing the joint is weak or failing to contract on demand, other muscles will automatically step in and help to make sure that the joint is stable and secure.

Over time, this means that the compensating muscles get overworked with the additional load-bearing that they weren't designed for, while the weak muscles continue to not contribute due to the original loss in neuromuscular feedback.

Once the problem is recognized through the assessment and addressed using MTP-MAT, the client can get back to doing what they love! The improving strength of the weaker muscles will automatically provide increasing relief to the ones being overexerted.

### **Implementation of MTP-MAT**

Implementation varies widely on a case-by-case basis because everyone needs a different approach.

MTP-MAT is a non-invasive technique, and the sessions are meant to facilitate the connectivity of weakened muscles, so frequency can often be key regardless of the client's situation coming in. Clients come in more frequently at first and then come in on a maintenance-based timeline depending on their individual needs.

Restoring full strength and connection to a weak, injured, or failing muscle is crucial to recovery, but also for avoiding future injury.

### **Who is MTP-MAT for?**

Myofascial Trigger Point Muscle Activation Techniques is a modality that can be beneficial to everyone.

MTP-MAT helps increase stability and range of motion in healthy people who are hoping to simply improve their health or physical fitness. It is also used to help improve the ease of movement and overall balance of those who have mobility limitations, tendencies toward certain muscular weaknesses or have been injured.

It doesn't matter whether a client is someone hoping to get the absolute most out of their workouts at the gym or someone who needs help with a mobility issue they have been having that restricts them from having a full life. MTP-MAT can be beneficial to everyone.

It is customized to expand the boundaries of the current abilities and help combat the individual's body imbalances to increase their quality of life.

### **What are the Benefits of MTP-MAT?**

MTP-MAT has been shown to help make significant progress in a client's recovery from injury by helping reduce inflammation throughout the body and creating a prime environment for healing due to the increase in stability. However, there are more lasting benefits that make it an appealing practice beyond the rehabilitation benefits.