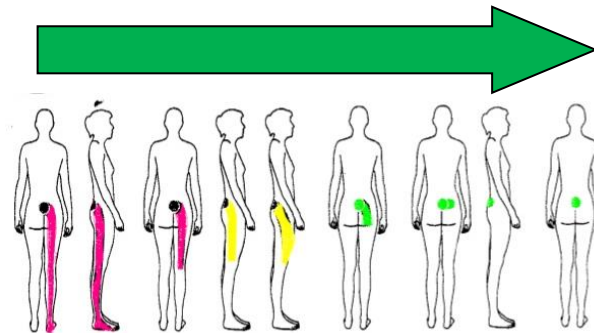


OrthoBethesda Therapy Services

Centralization vs. Peripheralization

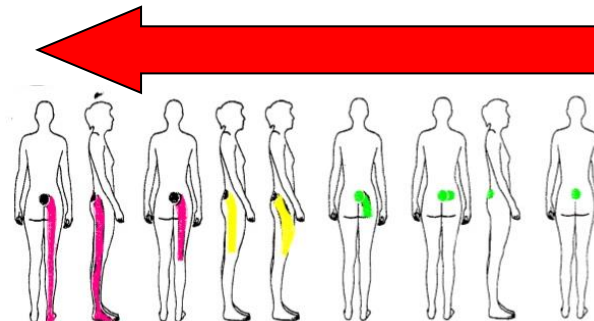
Pain originating from the back or neck often travels up and down the leg or arm, respectively. Pain that spreads further down the legs or arms can be described as *peripheralizing*. Pain that moves from a large, spread-out area to a smaller, more localized area can be described as *centralizing*. These phenomena are caused by changing pressure placed on spinal nerve(s) as they exit the spinal canal. This concept is of utmost importance for a physical therapist when designing your plan of care.

Centralization of pain that occurs during certain positions, movements or exercises is desirable. This indicates the pressure placed on the nerve(s) is being relieved. This means that you are getting better, even if the back or neck pain increases in intensity.



<http://www.slideshare.net/saharneamat/mechanical-diagnosis-therapy-mckenzie-method>

Peripheralization of pain that occurs during certain positions, movements or exercises is NOT desirable. This indicates that increased pressure is being placed on the nerve(s). Avoid activities that cause peripheralization of your symptoms. Even if your back or neck pain decreases in intensity, if pain spreads further down the extremity, you are getting worse.



<http://www.slideshare.net/saharneamat/mechanical-diagnosis-therapy-mckenzie-method>