

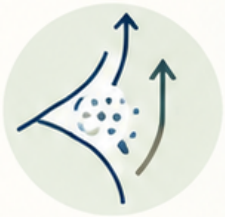
Law of Facilitation



When an impulse has passed once through a certain set of neurons to the exclusion of others, it will tend to take the same course on a future occasion, and each time it traverses this path the resistance will be less.



The law of facilitation is like rain on a dirt hill. The first rain will form small drainage ditches. It is easy for subsequent rains to run through these ditches, making them larger. Each rain will form a larger and more strongly established drainage pattern with a unique and intricate pattern of tributaries.



Each time a nerve pathway is traversed, the nerve becomes easier or less resistant to nerve impulses in the future. The nerve pathway becomes **facilitated** (from the Latin root which means “easy”).



When an injury occurs, and the deviant and amplified nerve impulse (a rapid rate of fired impulses) respectively travels along the same circuit then that nerve pathway becomes facilitated. **The Law of Facilitation is the principle which explains why old injuries flare up at times when the system is stressed.** As the neurological activity heightens and the internuncial pool becomes more excited, these ‘easy’ pathways are less resistant to the impulses and a pain pattern becomes established. Eventually, such sustained reflex arc over-activity will create myofascial dysfunction as well as chronic pain, unless therapeutically addressed.



Seen from a distance, the strained muscle with an active trigger point refers pain through neuromuscular pathways in the reflex arc, to and away from the central nervous system. The region which the trigger point fires into is a region not only of pain, but of vasoconstriction, ischemia, toxic metabolic waste build-up, neuroirritation and hypertonicity. These factors, in turn, cause more rapid rates of nerve impulses firing into reflex circuits. Eventually spill-over pain occurs in the patients beyond the essential pain zone.



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