

Richard L. Van Buskirk, DO, PhD, FAAO

Board Certified in Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine

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TO ALL NEW PATIENTS:

I would like to welcome you to my practice. Orthopedic and Osteopathic medicine is a specialty devoted to the evaluation, diagnosis and non-operative treatment of painful, musculoskeletal diseases. This includes diagnostic and therapeutic modalities. As you might have a few questions as to what Osteopathy and my practice is all about, I hope the information below will be of help to you.

What is Osteopathy? Osteopathy is a system of medicine that applies a unique philosophy to medical care. With a strong emphasis on the inter-relationship of the body's nerves, muscles, bones and organs, Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine, or D.O.'s, apply the philosophy of treating the whole person to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness, disease and injury using traditional medical practice such as drugs and surgery, along with manual and physical therapies (OMM).

Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.'s) who have been educated in the United States are fully licensed physicians that practice the full scope of medicine, like Doctors of Medicine (M.D.).

What is Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine? Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine is a specialty in Osteopathic Medicine and was developed to recognize those who had become expert in the diagnosis and treatment of musculoskeletal and related neurological medical problems. Typically these experts have had years of training and experience in dealing with Neuromusculoskeletal problems. As of 2009 there is no comparable M.D. specialty. Those orthopedic surgeons who have elected not to practice surgery are the only M.D. group that is comparable. They typically are said to practice Orthopedic Medicine, although at this time it is not a recognized specialty.

What is the Still Technique? The Still Technique is a gentle, non-traumatic and specific musculoskeletal manipulative method of restoring normal range of motion. I was instrumental in the rediscovery and redevelopment of this manipulative method. I teach this very effective technique nationally and internationally, in 1999, my text, The Still Technique Manual, detailing the rediscovery and its applications, was published and is the primary text for teaching this technique at medical schools around the world. It is now in its Second Edition.

Over one hundred years ago, Andrew Taylor Still, M.D., D.O. was a physician and the father of osteopathic medicine as well as the founder of the first college of osteopathic medicine. Dr. Still founded a philosophy of medicine based on ideas that date back to Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine. The philosophy focuses on the unity of all body parts. He identified the musculoskeletal system as a key element of health and recognized the body's ability to heal itself and stressed preventive medicine, eating properly, and keeping fit.

Is this osteopathic medicine the same as chiropractic? No. The majority of specialists in Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine use non-traumatic forms of manipulative treatment rather than High-Velocity-High-Amplitude (HVHA), also known as "bone-cracking" used by most Chiropractors. Osteopathic musculoskeletal manipulation requires detailed diagnosis, including history taking, physical examination and specific motion testing for each spinal segment and/or joint, muscle, or tendon to be treated. The treatment given is tailored to the specific findings of restriction of range of motion, asymmetry of presentation, tissue texture changes and tenderness for each tissue examined.

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What does FAAO stand for? The FAAO stands for Fellowship in the American Academy of Osteopathy, which is a doctoral-level honor requiring extensive examination and a thesis. To date there are approximately 70 living fellows. My background also includes a Ph.D. in Neuroscience from Duke University with eight years of post-graduate brain and Neuromusculoskeletal research and undergraduate and graduate teaching at the University level and at two medical schools. Subsequently, I matriculated at and then graduated from the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, did one year of general surgery residency and then a Family Medicine residency. I am board certified in Family Medicine as well as Osteopathic Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine. I have admitting and consulting privileges at Sarasota Memorial Hospital.

What do you do specifically? As a specialist in Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine, I diagnose and treat a wide variety of neural and musculoskeletal problems including, but not limited to, neck (cervical), upper back (thoracic), lower back (lumbosacral) and pelvic pain, including that from spondylosis (arthritis), non-surgical arthritis (scoliosis), osteoporosis, osteoarthritis involving most joints, acute and chronic sciatica, brachial plexopathy, carpal tunnel syndrome and other forms of radiculopathy and nerve compression, spinal disc syndromes, non-surgical spinal stenosis, headache, including classical and non-classical migraine, bursitis, tendonitis, lateral and medial epicondylitis (tennis elbow) of the elbows, incomplete (restrictive) rotator cuff tears, ankylosis of joints (frozen joints), chondromalacia patella, enthesopathy (soft tissue disease or injury) of any appendicular (limbs) joints, myalgia, fibromyalgia, mechanical gait disturbances, ligament and tendon laxity, sprains and strains, and costochondritis and musculoskeletal chest pain.

When indicated by diagnostic findings, patients are referred on to the appropriate specialists, including orthopedic surgeons and neurosurgeons, or referred back to the patient's primary care physician for non-musculoskeletal medical problems.

My staff and I look forward to meeting with you. Please take the time to fill out the extensive medical questionnaire and patient information sheet to save time when you come in for your appointment. Don't forget to bring your most recent radiology reports, X-rays, MRI's, and any related studies, as well as your medications (or a list of medications), insurance cards and driver license.

Warm Regards,

Richard L. VanBuskirk, D.O.