

INTRODUCTION

Myofascial Stretching is a self treatment technique that results in permanent lengthening of the body's connective tissue and has the capacity to dramatically improve health and quality of life. It follows the principles of Myofascial Release, utilizing sustained pressure and active elongation into restrictions in the fascial system. Many of the techniques were developed by the authors while engaging in self treatment or working with clients. Some are taught at the Myofascial Release Treatment Centers in Sedona, AZ and Paoli, PA. Others stretches may seem familiar to you, but are performed with Myofascial Release principles in mind. Two ways to do Myofascial Stretching are included: one using a 4-inch inflatable ball and one without. These two methods complement each other. It can be very effective to first release an area of tightness with the ball and then follow up with an active stretch to that same region.

The book is divided into twelve sections relating to different parts of the body. This arbitrary division is for simplification in organizing the information. In treatment the body is always considered as a whole. Read the instructions to help you decide where to start. If, after reading the instructions you are still having difficulty knowing how to proceed, go to the chart on page 10 for ideas of which techniques may be related to your problem area.

While there is a narrative description along with each photograph, it is **IMPERATIVE** the reader study the information for releasing the fascial system described in the Frequently Asked Questions and Instructions. This stretching protocol will likely be very different from anything you have learned before. If done properly, it will result in permanent release of the fascial system, rather than temporary gains obtained through traditional stretching.

This book was written for both the lay person who has chronic pain, muscular tightness and/or postural dysfunction; and also for the Myofascial Release Clinician to give their patients for home exercise programs. When used alone this book can be a valuable resource for healing chronic pain. However, we would like to stress the importance of receiving treatment from a John F. Barnes trained Myofascial Release Therapist in order to experience the feel of the fascial system and the fascial releases with a skilled practitioner. When these Myofascial Stretches are done in combination with receiving Myofascial Release Treatment, quantum leaps in healing can be achieved.