

Significantly, a series of six Alexander Technique lessons followed by GP-prescribed exercise was about 70% as beneficial as 24 Alexander Technique lessons alone.

There were no adverse events recorded by any of the participants allocated to the series of 6 or 24 Alexander Technique lessons.

Since the effect of massage on activities was no longer significant by one year, whereas the effect of Alexander Technique lessons was maintained, the trial authors concluded that the long-term benefits of taking Alexander Technique lessons are unlikely to be due to placebo effects of attention and touch and more likely to be due to active learning of the Technique.

The Alexander Technique is an educational method that can be learned by anyone, that helps people recognize, understand, and avoid poor habits affecting postural tone and neuromuscular coordination. Lessons involve an individualized approach designed to provide lifelong skills for self-care that can lead to a wide variety of benefits.

The price of back pain

Back pain is the leading cause of disability in Americans under 45 years old.³ In 2005 Americans spent \$85.9 billion looking for relief from back and neck pain through surgery, doctor's visits, X-rays, MRI scans and medications, up from \$52.1 billion in 1997, according to a study in the Feb. 13 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). That money hasn't helped reduce the number of sufferers; in 2005, 15 percent of U.S. adults reported back problems—up from 12 percent in 1997.⁴

What happens in a lesson?

In an Alexander lesson, the teacher observes the posture and movement of the student and helps to improve their coordination. The teacher uses gentle hands-on guidance together with verbal explanation and demonstration. Sitting, standing, bending, walking and daily activities are practiced in a lesson. Students learn to attend to head poise and lengthening of the spine in a way that facilitates normal postural tone and de-compresses vertebrae and discs.

Lessons are tailored to the individual's needs and capabilities and are applied to each student's daily activities.

Students are usually asked to remove shoes, but otherwise remain fully clothed.

The cost of lessons varies according to region and a teacher's overhead and expenses. The cost is usually similar to physical therapy or Pilates.

-more-

³ <http://www.painfoundation.org/page.asp?file=Newsroom/PainFacts.htm>

⁴ <http://www.newsweek.com/id/110767>

Contact: The American Society for the Alexander Technique (AmSAT)
www.amsat.ws
Tel: (800) 473-0620
Media: amsatmedia@amsat.ws
Office: info@amsat.ws

The AmSAT Mission: To define, maintain and promote the Alexander Technique at its highest standard of professional practice and conduct

AmSAT was founded in 1987. It is the largest professional organization of Alexander Technique teachers in the United States.

AmSAT teachers are members of the Alexander Technique Affiliated Societies representing the highest standards of professional training and conduct worldwide.

AmSAT Teaching members:

- Are certified to teach the Technique after successfully completing a three-year, full-time training course approved by the Society or an affiliated society.
- Adhere to the Society's published Code of Professional Conduct.
- See: <http://www.alexandertech.org/teachers/FindTeachers.php>

#####