Myofascial Release in Physical Therapy
Introduction of Myofacial Release

- MFR is a type of therapy that uses hands on techniques to release muscles shortness and tightness.
- This is done by providing gentle sustained pressure into Myofascial connective tissue that’s located under the muscles.
Myofascial Release

- John F. Barnes was the founder for MFR.
- He was a physical therapist that graduated from University of Pennsylvania, and strongly believed in mind/body concept.
- He learned about MFR after his weight lifting injury when fracturing his L5 and ripping some of the lumbar ligaments.
- He tried everything but nothing worked to relieve his pain until he came up with this new technique that gave permanent results.
Technique

Therapist provides gentle pressure for some period of time used to soften and liquify hard or tender areas within the fluid components of connective tissue, while stretching, separating and straightening its fibrous components.

MFR technique does not require any kind of lotion compared to message therapy, only special kind of pressure is provided to certain areas of the body, where pain is present and is held there for some period of time in order to release unwanted tension and relive the pain.

Trigger points are sometimes the main target to provide the pressure to, because they are the most sensitive spots in skeletal muscles.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fuaz-nWnr5M
Importance of MFR in PT field

• MFR is used for any population seeking for physical therapy. Patients come to PT for many reasons like: back pain, cervical pain, scoliosis, rehab after surgeries, carpal tunnel, neurological dysfunction and many more which all of them can be treated my MFR depending on their condition.

• Anyone can benefit from MFR starting from teen agers that play sports that either might have tight of pulled muscle the way to geriatrics diagnosed which can have some kind of contracture or specific disease.

• Therapist provide hands on work, to treat the patients, relieve them from pain their experiencing, and get them back to their ADLS permanently.

• Continuing education course might be required in order to specialize in MFR techniques, depending on the facilities.

• MFR would be billed as Manual Treatment.
Self-Myofascial Relief

- Foam roller are used to perform MFR technique on yourself, doesn’t require therapist just foam roller, tennis ball, pvc pipe or field hockey ball depending on the body part being worked on.
- Gently roll out the body part on the foam roller until you feel tender spot, staying on that exact spot for 20+ seconds will relieve muscle tension that’s present.
- So many body parts can be worked on by this technique.
- Good example for patients home exercise program, can be used anywhere, any time.
Example of Self-Myofascial Release

[Image of self-myofascial release exercises with a woman using foam rolling techniques to release different muscle groups]
Tests, Progression, Intervention

- There are no special tests for this technique, but you can always measure ROM, mark pain scale, test strength before and after the treatment, that way there are results to compare and see if it’s effective.

- Intervention would be for the therapist to apply more firmer pressure in order to release more tension, and progressing from softer to harder foam roller for self-myofascial release. When the patient can tolerate rolling a body part on a harder surface, since it can get though.

Progression would be comparing how the patient is feeling before and after the treatments of MFR
Sources for more information on MFR

- myofascialrelease.com
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWRuS9xAbMo
- Mercer Country Community College online database
- http://www.performbetter.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/PBOnePieceView?storeId=10151&catalogId=10751&languageId=-1&pagename=91
Reference


