

ATM2
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The ATM2 has been developed to treat movement impairment of the spine, hip and shoulder. It utilises the concept of the requirement for lumbo-pelvic stability for normal stable function of the lumbar spine. By providing external mechanical support and compression to this region it allows retraining of core muscles about the, now stable, pelvis*.

The device looks like a vertical treatment table. Three stabilisation belts encircle the pelvis and thoracic cage: they are tightened with ratchets that can be moved simultaneously or singly to compress one side of the body more than the other. The body is fixed in a good postural position – a certain amount of pelvic or thoracic torsion can be corrected and pelvic tilt can be altered with the judicious use of the ratchets and blocks and bolsters.

Once a pain-free position for the user is established, there are five options open to practitioner and patient:

- Use of an additional resistance belt to allow the patient to perform small resisted movements within a pain-free range: according to the ATM2 concept this stimulates normal neuromuscular function around the pelvis.
- Use of one of the stabilising belts in a similar way to Mulligan's seatbelt SNAGS techniques: patient extends back over the fixation afforded by the belt.
- With two hands available and the patient's pelvis fixed the way is open for vigorous passive rib and segmental mobilisation of, especially, the thoracic spine in a functional position.
- Passive and active assisted hip joint mobilisation using the extra hip mobilisation device, or indeed conducted very easily by the therapist.

- Soft tissue mobilisation using passive stretches (uniquely effective for the hip flexors), hold / relax techniques, oscillatory techniques etc.

Patients of all ages like the ATM2 because they feel in complete control of their movements (the stabilisation belts are often described as "comforting"); they experience a treatment which is totally pain-free, non-threatening and safe; and they feel instantly better when they step off the device.

Manual therapists who have used the device are happy to attest to its taking some of the physical load off their thumbs, wrists, elbows and backs. All therapists have wished for an extra pair of hands whilst treating patients: and most have fantasised about being able to stabilise those heavy rugby players so as to localise their treatment to a specific area!



Physiotherapists and athletic trainers will recognise a further use for the ATM2 in the field of performance enhancement in sport. Footballers, runners, cyclists, golfers, racquet sportsmen, throwers and swimmers could all expect better performance with optimal trunk and hip flexibility.

More information on the ATM2 can be obtained from www.backproject.com

* a recent independent research project at the University of Western Australia substantiated the ATM theory, confirming that it "significantly altered measures of muscle dysfunction and pain in those symptomatic for low back pain".