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Title of presentation: The Functional Relevance of Fascia

Abstract

Until recently, the fascia was largely considered a connective tissue structure that surrounds the muscles, nerves, vasculature and other functional elements of the body. Recent data derived from clinical imaging studies, cadavers and animal models indicate that fascia is not merely a passive abundant contributor to behavior but is innervated; it can transmit force, influence movement and actively contract.

A critical determinant of the role of fascia is the nature of its innervation. This review will examine the available data on fascial innervation, as well as changes in innervation in response to inflammation. The functional implications of these findings for pain, proprioception, and active contractile roles for fascia in movement will be considered. Finally, we will identify gaps in the literature, including the regional variation in fascial innervation and the importance of developing clinically relevant models of fascial inflammation and dysfunction.