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**LIA Lifestyle Instruction Aid**

**aa11. Fixations and Food By**  
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Fixations in joints, what are they and what damage do they do?  
What does this term 'Fixation' mean?

A fixation in a joint is a problem where the joint fails to move through its normal full range. It may be able to move a little, but not to its full amount. Why is this bad for the joint and particularly bad for spinal health?

First we should understand that it is bad for more than just the joint. Joints are moved by muscles. The body is in an equilibrium where muscles move joints efficiently without one muscle opposing another. Some muscles depend on other muscles to do things that help them.

A certain amount of tension in the muscle groups is required so various groups of muscle can work together. This all happens in a nice synchronized fashion to get what we call fluid movement. That means nice smooth motions that look natural. When a joint stops moving properly several things can happen. The smooth fluid motion of all the muscles working together, gets messed up. One muscle, or one group of muscles, may have to do more work than it normally should. They may have to take up the slack so to speak. If this is prolonged then it can lead to overuse syndromes.

Another problem that happens when joints stop moving properly is with the cartilage tissue that lines the joint. Cartilage is a special type of tissue. It acts as a shock absorber and a lubricator to keep the joint moving smoothly. Cartilage takes pressure off the bones. But, cartilage has special properties for softness and slipperiness that must be maintained by the body. Movement appears to be important for cartilage health and maintaining this slipperiness. When a fixation occurs the movement in the joint is reduced or lost altogether and that causes the cartilage to degenerate. It dries out and begins to pit and crack. Arthritis sets in. This has all been proven with animal research several decades ago.

A prominent orthopaedic surgeon, Dr. Salter, initiated this idea in medical circles that movement was important for joints, for instance joints in the spine. His research started the medical trend to get people back to work early and get them moving quickly after a low back injury. Chiropractors had long been proponents of early movement in back pain and in fact, the chiropractic spinal adjustment does just that, it gets the spine moving.

Other things may also cause the cartilage to degenerate in addition to lack of movement. Some of these other things are injuries, excessive use, and also possibly foods. Some foods may

attack the joint cartilage tissues, but we do not know enough about this at the present time. We know that some foods attack the lining of the intestines and we know that some conditions as in rheumatoid arthritis, attack the joints.

Some researchers have indicated that certain families of foods may be harmful to the body. This is championed by the caveman diet or palaeolithic diet to scientists. This diet maintains that cereal grains and legumes among other foods, may be causing harm to some humans. We will have to wait for further research in this field.

Some foods may actually plug up the blood vessels to a degree. If this happens then cartilage has a special problem. Cartilage has no blood supply. It relies on the surrounding tissues to get its nutrients. Anything that reduces the oxygen in the surrounding tissues would weaken the cartilage. This leads us to question whether or not some types of foods actually cause a temporary slowing of the blood flow in one localised area of tissue. If that slowing occurs at bed time due to the consumption of food at bed time, then a double whammy can occur. The sluggish blood flow coupled with the lack of movement during sleep can lead to damaged joints and stiffness in the morning

It is known that some common foods contain elements that can directly damage some body tissues. For instance the gluten in wheat, rye and barley can directly damage the wall of the small intestines in some people leading to much pain and malnutrition. It is also known that there is a higher incidence of some diseases after a person has had the flue. Diabetes, kidney disease and rheumatoid arthritis would be three instances and some researchers have suspected that it may be something in food that is the culprit. People with sore joints may want to try a modified diet to see if it helps them. Dr. Ouellette's Pain Relief Diet would be a good place to start.

A joint has other tissue around it in addition to muscles and bones. Ligaments join joints and sometimes a sprain of these ligaments can fixate a joint or tighten up the joint when the ligament swells. A viscous cycle might then set up where the lack of movement leads to more degeneration which then leads to more stress on the ligaments which leads to more swelling which then leads to more degeneration. Sometimes people complain of pain for years after a sprain. A chiropractor can help this situation, but it is a delicate matter adjusting a degenerated arthritic joint.

Joint fixations are not good to have. They cause problems for the body and may lead to much degeneration and pain in later years. This is one reason why regular chiropractic treatments have a beneficial effect on the body.

Learning which foods may be a problem for your physiology and which food make pain worse, along with which ones make pain better, is a good approach to joint problems in any part of the body. Adding chiropractic care with nutrition advice for pain may turn out to be a smart move for people with joint pain.