

## Onsen Applications #1

The following is a sample of how I've used the Onsen Technique to treat certain conditions. Hopefully the readers will see how expedient and incredibly helpful this method is.

A female athlete from Mexico was suffering from extreme pain in the pelvic region after she had completed the 2007 Seattle Marathon last Thanksgiving. The first step in the treatment protocol of the Onsen Technique is to assess the patient's structure. It takes just a couple of minutes to assess for pelvic deviations: high ilium, SI joint fixation, anterior/posterior iliac rotations, pubic bone alignment, sacral distortions, and lumbar vertebrae rotations. By assessing the athlete's ASIS and PSIS (bony landmarks found on the front and back of the two ilia, or hip bones), I found her left ilium to be tilted (rotated) backwards. In women, the ASIS (in front) is supposed to be slightly inferior to the PSIS (in back), and hers was slightly higher in the front. This was good news; a posteriorly rotated ilium will cause the pubic bone on that same side to be higher because it is *part* of the ilium. By gently drawing the heel of my hand down her abdomen (the athlete was supine) I located her pubic symphysis. I asked her to take a deep breath and then exhale. This relaxed her abdomen so that I could compare the pubic rami. Clearly, her left pubic bone was superior to her right. Yes!! This confirmed the posterior tilt assessment, and wouldn't it be great if the pubic bone misalignment was the source of her pain?

After performing mobilizations for both the left SI joint and the junction of the pubic bones so the ilium would be able to move, I placed the athlete in a supine position on the table so that her left leg could stretch off the edge. I had her grasp her right knee and pull it to her chest so that her right ilium would not come forward during the stretch. With my left hand also supporting her right knee, I placed my right hand on her left knee, instructing her to lift that leg into flexion against my resistance with 20 % effort for 7 seconds of isometric contraction. Next I asked her to relax, and *as we allowed her leg to stretch toward the floor, her ilium rotated in an anterior direction*

This is a great example of how the Onsen Technique uses the specific application of Contract/Relax stretching to realign deviated structure. After 3 to 5 reps she had stretched as far as possible, so now it was time to reassess. Standard Onsen protocol is always to end by reassessing, so we can see what has (or hasn't) been accomplished. Reassessing showed her pubic bones to be evenly aligned, and her ilium returned to a normal (slightly anterior) tilt!!

Can I mention that when she walked, the athlete was completely pain free? She wept tears of relief; she had been running marathons in pain for over 2 years and given up hope of finding help after consulting numerous doctors, physical therapists, chiropractors, etc. Using the Onsen Technique, in 15 minutes we simply assessed, corrected, and reassessed: problem solved, no soft tissue work necessary. It only remained to teach her a stretch so the correction would hold.

When doing treatment work it's essential to know what's going on with the skeleton. The Onsen Technique provides us with this information. After 33 years of practice I've found no better protocol for identifying and treating the problem, not to mention a *profound leap in understanding the big picture*, when working with the body.

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