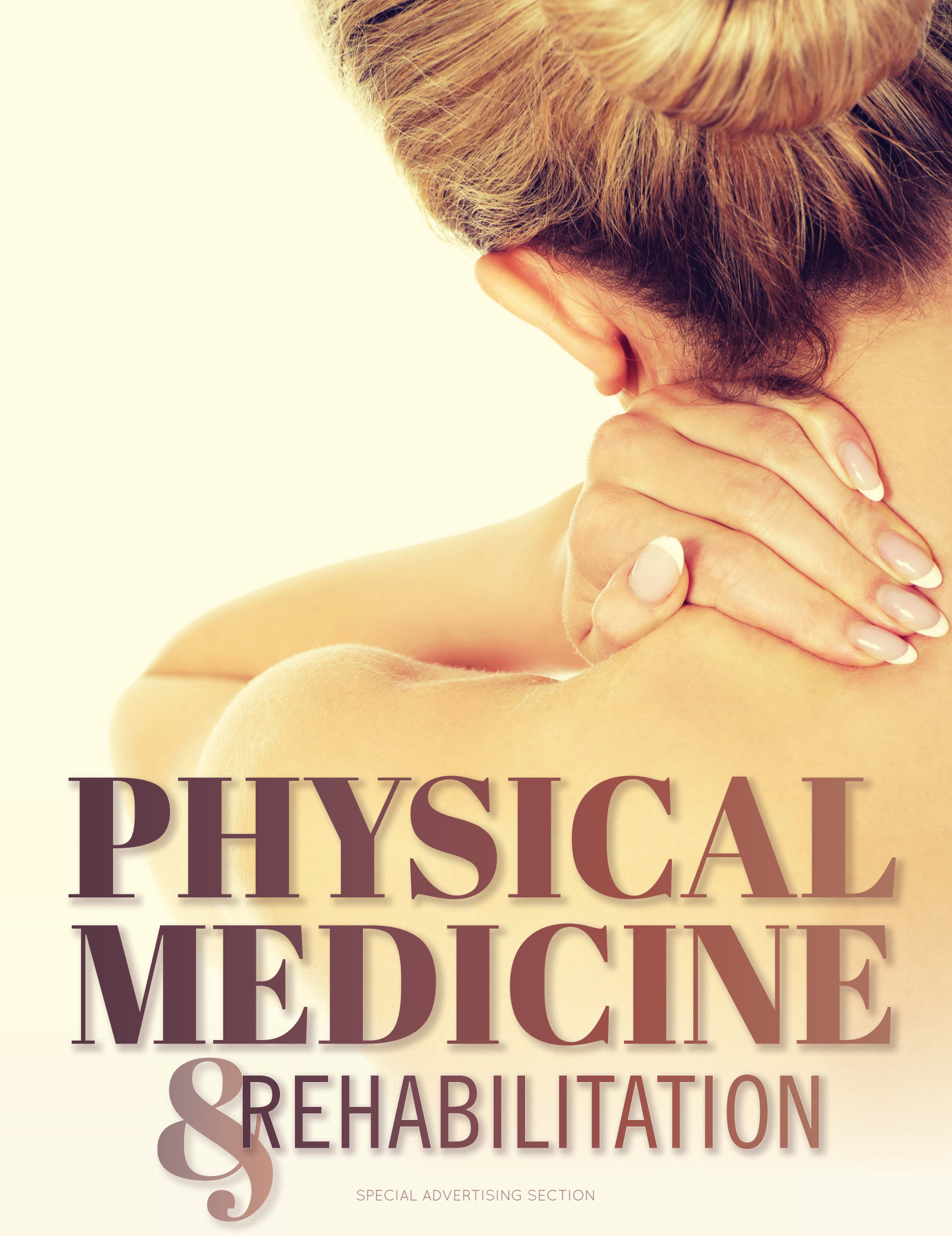




PHYSICAL MEDICINE & REHABILITATION

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We've heard the popular quip "There's an app for that," many times because it can be applied to so many situations.

Technology permeates all aspects of our life and no industry has gone unaffected including physical medicine and rehabilitation. So, when someone says "There's an app for that," about this industry, they're likely referring to recent advancements in assessing the cause of a musculoskeletal problem and/or pain management.

"We've come a long way in innovating how we assess patients and letting them know what is going on and why a medical doctor might not have found anything," said Steven Knauf, Senior DC - The Joint Chiropractic, AZ District. "We've always had X-rays, CAT scans and MRIs, but for a lot of people living with chronic pain issues, you won't find anything with that type of imaging, and that can be frustrating for people when the medical doctor says there's nothing wrong."

Private companies are developing these innovative tools to provide answers about why a patient is experiencing pain. There's one app that provides postural analysis, where you take a picture of yourself and the app provides data that reveals where you are unbalanced. There's also a scale that measures your weight distribution to determine the weight you place on one foot versus the other. This reveals if you are putting more pressure on one side of your body than the other, again creating a structural imbalance and the potential for feeling pain.



Some advancements are improvements on existing tools such as the spinal cord stimulator. This has existed as a pain relief option for more than a decade but technology has increased its functionality and offers more customizable and individualized treatment options.

New technology now allows for direct targeting of the stimulation to a specific area where the patient is experiencing pain by overriding it with a different signal. Also, while the stimulator



Are you missing out on life because of back or neck pain?

Here are four steps to get you back to life

1 Learn What Symptoms Mean

A painful spasm can often be resolved with home remedies, while numbness or weakness requires immediate treatment to prevent the symptoms from becoming permanent.

2 Get Our Home Remedy Book

About 80 percent of simple back and neck pain can resolve with home remedies. Spine Group Arizona offers a *Home Remedy Book* with symptom charts and pain-relieving stretches.

3 Learn All Your Options

Some symptoms from back or neck problems can be relieved with non-surgical treatment options like a simple injection or customized stretches. Or you may qualify for minimally invasive surgery.

4 Get A Second Opinion

If you've been told you need spine surgery, you may want to get a second opinion from a spine center that includes non-surgical treatment options. You may learn that you don't need surgery after all.

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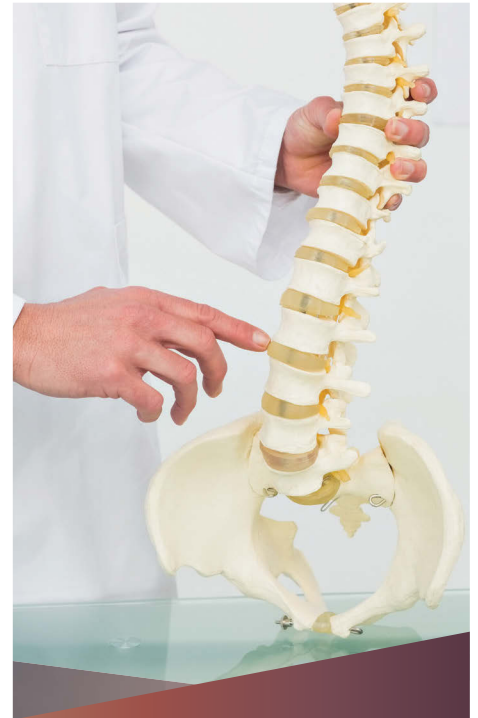


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itself is an implant that requires a minor surgical procedure, now it can be taken for a non-surgical test drive first.

Using a needle that is similar to that used for an epidural while a woman is in labor, the catheter has a battery attached to it. The patient then goes home and tries basic activities to see if they can perform them pain free.

"From that standpoint, its attractive because its reversible," said Dr. Sachin Narain, MD at The Pain Center of Arizona. "If the test run doesn't work, you don't go through with the implant. If it does, we move forward with it."

Narain is among the members from The Pain Clinic of Arizona who are testing a new medication that can be injected into a herniated disc, which allows the disc to repair itself. The end results are both a structural fix as well as pain relief. There are only early study results but initial double blind studies have been positive.

Another product undergoing testing would address the rampant issue with opioid abuse. Researchers are working with companies to develop ways to change pills such as oxycodone, so they include an abuse deterrent function. If someone crushes a pill or manipulates it in a way other than how it was meant to be ingested, something is released besides the opiate so the pill can't be taken the wrong way.



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affect more than

1 out of 2

PEOPLE

in the United States
age 18 and over

These tools take on greater importance, as our population continues to age and physical medicine gains greater acceptance by the medical community and within other segments of society such as athletics, as an alternative to surgery or as a preventative measure.

According to the Bone and Joint Initiative, musculoskeletal diseases affect more than one out of every two people in the United States age 18 and over, and nearly three out of four age 65 and over. Trauma, back pain, and arthritis are the three most common musculoskeletal conditions reported, and for which health care visits to physicians' offices, emergency departments, and hospitals occur each year.

Consider that back pain is the second most common neurological ailment in the United States. Only a headache is more common.

We've seen the pendulum swing toward physical medicine and rehabilitation, as a way to prevent and just stay well instead of taking medicine to cover systems and going the surgical route. As this swing continues in this direction, the role physical medicine and rehabilitation plays in our lives will only continue to grow.



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