



BRIEF SUMMARY OF ARTICLES & THOUGHTS ON MEDICAL IMAGING

Summary of Articles

- In all, these articles points to the fact that medical imaging may be precise at picking up a lot of details, but we may not yet know what to look for. Structures that we used to blame for patients' pain seem to be **equally "damaged "on MRI of non-symptomatic individuals making us question whether they are still relevant clinically**
- Furthermore, study #4 suspects that knowledge of MRI results may even affect patients negatively in terms of physical and mental health status. I believe that patients are entitled to know what is the condition that they have. Knowledge of the condition can empower patients **if and only** if they are accurate and relevant
- Telling a patient that there is degenerative changes at the disc when almost 75% of non-symptomatic individuals < 50 years old has is useless! Patient needs to know what is going on but also need to be properly educated on typical findings that we may see on medical imaging



What Are Medical Imaging Good For?

- I don't believe that imaging is completely useless. Imaging is in fact great for **ruling out fractures, torn ligaments, ruptured tendon, systemic pathologies, etc.** These are conditions that may require surgeries or other interventions
- As physiotherapists, we are trained to pick up signs that it's not a mechanical problem and would refer accordingly. When not responding to conventional treatments, we can refer patients for further scans to investigate the problem
- Imaging, when performed after a physical assessment, **could help confirm our findings and tell us how severely damaged tissues actually are and whether surgery might be necessary**



Thorough Clinical Assessment

- I know a mechanic who specializes in German cars and he once tried to figure out why my car makes this weird noise only from 43-57 km/h.... He started by probing about when exactly does the car makes such a noise? What it sounded like? Was it going uphill or downhill? modifications made to the vehicle? In my mind.. I was like.. isn't this what I do all day long...
- There are lights on the dashboard for the engine, brakes, fluids, etc.. along with fancy computer chips that takes readings from the cars. However, according to him.. nothing is superior to doing some detective work because sensors could become faulty and computer softwares may not be programmed to look for what is relevant in order to repair a particular problem
- Clinical assessment is a very power tool because **it is the only system that listens to the patient and is guided by the symptoms.** I personally believe that new technology is great, but cannot yet replace the need to physically evaluate patients

Concluding Remarks

- When getting chased down by a 30 feet dinosaur, most people would start running for their lives, and not many would turn around and try to figure out whether it's a tyrannosaurus or a supersaurus..That is unless your foot got stuck somewhere and you really can't move at all... only then would most people look behind and pray hoping it's just an herbivore...
- The point is.. at the end of the day, what most patients want is regain their mobility. If physiotherapy or any other discipline can get patients the range, strength, or movement pattern that they are missing, does it still matter which structure is really affected?