Finding the Strike Zone

DAVID CAPOBIANCO’S JOURNEY TO GET BACK ON THE MOUND.

Stronger than Surgery

DAVID MECHLING USES OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY INSTEAD OF SURGERY
Jay Mix’s rehabilitation journey began in 2001 with a discectomy to address sciatica caused by a herniated disc in his low back. Additional surgery to repair a ruptured disc followed in 2004.

In 2015, Jay’s sciatica returned. After trying a variety of treatments without success, Jay underwent spinal fusion surgery in 2017 to help relieve his pain. Following this procedure, Jay continued to experience pain and numbness in his leg. In 2018, Jay underwent a fourth surgery to remove scar tissue and a bone spur that was pressing on his sciatic nerve. Jay contacted our department following his fourth surgery with unresolved pain. As a very active person at home and in the community, his health was interfering with his daily life.

“I am extremely thankful for the care and instruction I received from Erica and her staff. She has helped me tremendously.”
Our clinic is located in the lower level of the Opilka Family Wellness Center, which is very convenient for members of the community in and around the Altamont area.

Our staff consists of a physical therapist, two physical therapy assistants, an occupational therapist, a speech therapist, and a customer support person for insurance and scheduling needs. Although our staff is smaller than at the main clinic in Effingham, most patients comment that this is what they enjoy most about this clinic location. We provide an atmosphere where patients are able to get to know each other and we, as therapists, are able to provide more personal and individualized sessions.

The clinic has state-of-the-art equipment, including a full therapy gym, private treatment rooms and various modality machines. We offer specialized services such as Astym® therapy, advanced vestibular rehabilitation and balance training, lymphedema therapy, customized splinting and Lee Silverman Voice Training (LSVT) for Parkinson’s patients. The occupational therapy staff specializes in upper extremity disorders and lymphedema. The speech therapy staff treats speech, language, swallow and/or cognitive disorders. We are continually expanding our skills to stay up-to-date on the latest treatment techniques. Patients that would benefit from services not offered at our Altamont clinic can easily be referred to the main facility in Effingham.

We dedicate every therapy session to address each of our patients as a whole person. In doing so, this allows us to develop an individualized therapy program to address one or more physical deficits the patient may be experiencing. When we complete therapy in this manner, it helps patients to achieve their best possible activity level and they feel better overall. Patients are often especially thankful that we take the extra time and measures to help them achieve their best possible outcome.

After a thorough initial evaluation, it was determined that muscular tightness throughout his low back and leg were probable contributors to his pain and radicular symptoms. Our skilled staff at the St. Anthony’s Physical Rehabilitation and Wellness clinic in Altamont completed Astym® therapy, manual and functional stretching, and core stabilization techniques to help improve Jay’s mobility. He was also referred to our Physical Rehabilitation and Wellness clinic located with the Richard E. Workman Sports and Wellness Complex in Effingham for aquatic therapy and a Dartfish® video running analysis. With results from the state-of-the-art Dartfish® analysis, Jay’s running form was evaluated. Therapists were able to pinpoint key aspects which would allow Jay to adjust his running form and decrease any risk of re-injury.

When asked about his rehabilitation journey Jay said, “My goal has been to return to my original active lifestyle of bicycling, softball, swimming, light jogging and various outdoor activities. This therapy has allowed me to go on a mission trip to New Zealand in April 2019, where I was involved in several outdoor activities. While I was unable to fully recover after having four back surgeries, I can light jog, swim, bike, and more. I am extremely thankful for the care and instruction I received from Erica and her staff. She has helped me tremendously. I am blessed to be as active as I am.”

Following discharge from physical therapy, Jay has reported he is able to return to activities that he enjoys, with fewer limitations and no leg pain. Way to go, Jay!
Do you have pain on the bottom of your foot or heel, when you take those first steps in the morning, or after you have been sitting for an extended period? Have you stopped running or walking because of foot pain? This pain may be caused by a condition known as Plantar Fasciitis. Plantar Fasciitis is an inflammation of the fascia on the bottom of the foot.

Chronic stress to the origin of the fascia on the calcaneus, or heel, causes the soft tissue to develop scar tissue. The body naturally lays down scar tissue in response to irritation or injury. The fibrous, strong scar tissue is meant to reinforce an area, but often ends up restricting movement and causing pain. This scar tissue causes more tightness in the ankle and foot, shortening step length, and altering your ambulation pattern.

Astym® treatment is a rehabilitation tool that stimulates the regenerative healing process. This manual therapy technique uses non-invasive tools to stimulate the healing process by improving blood flow and reducing scar tissue to the foot.

The therapist uses specific stroke techniques around the shin, calf, and all aspects of the ankle and foot. Abnormal tissue texture will feel very “bumpy”, as the tool moves over the skin.

The patient may experience mild discomfort during the treatment and occasionally some mild bruising and soreness.

Stretching to the gastrocsoleous and foot is also completed three to four times per day to improve tissue flexibility and improve remodeling of the tissue. At the end of the treatment session, patients typically state the heel and foot pain has decreased.

They also demonstrate a longer stride length with walking, and improved weight bearing on both feet. Six to ten visits is typically prescribed for Plantar Fasciitis pain with Astym®, stretching, strengthening and other manual therapy techniques to address dysfunction throughout the kinetic chain of the affected area.
Vestibular Rehabilitation
for Dizziness and Balance Disorders

Vestibular disorders are common among men and women of all ages and can result from a variety of conditions. Signs and symptoms vary and can be slight to severe.

At St. Anthony’s Physical Rehabilitation and Wellness, we offer treatment for vertigo, dizziness, unsteadiness of feet with balance, and fall prevention.

A Physical Therapy vestibular evaluation will include oculomotor eye testing to determine any abnormal eye movements with the head still or head moving and position changes to reproduce dizziness. Your evaluation will also include a balance or fall prevention. Our facility has a specialized Neurocom Balance Master.

A physician’s order is required to schedule a physical therapy evaluation. Please call 217-347-1243 to schedule an appointment.

WHAT IS ASTYM® TREATMENT?

Did you know that excess scar tissue can cause pain and movement restrictions? In fact, many chronic soft tissue problems are due to scarring and soft tissue degeneration.

Scar tissue is naturally formed around the body’s soft tissues (muscles, tendons, ligaments, etc.) in response to irritation and injury. While this strong tissue is meant to reinforce the area, it instead often causes pain and discomfort, preventing full recovery.

The body’s soft tissues degenerate due to a variety of factors including: age, strenuous use, weakened muscles acting as a stressor for other tissues, improper or repetitive movement, and more. These weakened tissues are more susceptible to injury and other issues.

Astym® treatment works by regenerating healthy soft tissues and eliminating or reducing unwanted scar tissue that may be causing discomfort.

Astym® treatment is highly effective in resolving conditions throughout different parts of the body, including pain in the shoulders, elbows, hands, wrists, hips, upper legs, knees, shins, feet and ankles.

Several Astym® treatments may be recommended to a patient depending on his or her underlying condition. Conditions that may be relieved or reduced with Astym® treatment include:

- Adhesive Capsulitis / Frozen Shoulder
- Impingement / Tendinitis of Rotator Cuff
- Lateral Epicondylitis / Tennis Elbow
- Medial Epicondylitis / Golfer’s Elbow
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- De Quervain’s
- Sprain-Thumb / Fingers
- Sprain-Wrist
- Trigger Finger
- Trochanteric Bursitis
- Hamstring Strain
- Groin Sprain / Strain
- IT Band Syndrome
- Degenerative Joint Disease
- Patellar Tendinosis
- Shin Splints
- Plantar Fasciopathy / Heel Pain
- Post-Surgical Hallux Valgus / Buionectomy
- Achilles Tendinitis
- Ankle Sprain
As a young pitcher with aspirations to pitch at the professional level, David Capobianco knew he needed to seek medical advice for his hip after experiencing chronic hip pain.

An MRI showed a labral tear of the left hip which was devastating for a left-handed pitcher. He underwent a labral repair on the left hip and started the rehab process. Unfortunately, when David returned to the mound, his hip pain returned and was no better than before. A second MRI showed that he had either re-torn it or the surgery was not successful.
By this time David had decided to sit out his fall baseball season at Lake Land College and go through the surgery again. New to the area, David sought the advice of teammates to determine who the best physical therapist in the area was to treat athletes, and his specific injury. The overwhelming majority referred him to HSHS St. Anthony’s Memorial Hospital to see Jon Frohning, a board certified specialist in orthopedic physical therapy. Because David sped through his rehab process the first time around, his surgeon was very conservative this episode and the plan was to progress very slowly to ensure David’s body and mind were ready to move on to the next phase.

Early on in the rehab process, David was able to take advantage of aquatic therapy and trained with Jennifer Fallert, a specialist in aquatic physical therapy. The use of Blood Flow Restriction Training (BFRT) therapy helped to make significant strength gains when it wasn’t yet appropriate to be lifting heavier weights. Soreness and muscle guarding were sometimes evident throughout the rehab process which hindered and altered David’s movement. With the use of trigger point dry needling, David was able to get past the pain and soreness in his hip to focus on the goal at hand, returning to pitching at a very high level.

An athlete’s journey from injury through recovery can be an emotional roller coaster, that often finishes with fear of re-injury. David was no different, as he was apprehensive and fearful of every discomfort he felt, worrying about the integrity of the repair and whether he would have to start all over again. There were many instances when David would call or text Jon on a weekend to make sure what he was feeling wasn’t serious.

Treating athletes at this stage can be quite difficult to get past the mental block of returning to sport. Having the ability to text or call Jon any time, any day really helped decrease that fear and apprehension for David. Return to sport testing through the Functional Movement Screen, Y-Balance testing, and Hop testing, showed that physically, he was ready to progress to the performance phase, but mentally he was still nervous about testing his hip on the mound. With Jon’s help and guidance, David progressed over the next five to six months and is nearing a return to competitive pitching.
10 Physical Therapists
11 Physical Therapy Assistants
4 Speech Language Therapists
7 Occupational Therapists
1 Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant

3 Locations...
Outpatient Therapy
-Within Richard E. Workman Sports and Wellness Complex – Effingham
-Within Opilka Family Wellness Center – Altamont
Inpatient Therapy
-At HSHS St. Anthony’s Memorial Hospital
NEW FOR 2019!

PARKINSON’S INITIATIVE
BIG for Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy: The BIG part of the program focuses on increased large limb movements making improvements to balance, speed of movement, speech and overall quality of life.

BLOOD FLOW RESTRICTION TRAINING & PHYSICAL THERAPY
Improving strength is a typical component of physical rehabilitation after injury. But often standing in the way of all the muscle building necessary to recover from an injury is the injury itself.

2019 EFFINGHAM DAILY NEWS PEOPLE’S CHOICE WINNER FOR BEST REHABILITATION SERVICES!

PHYSICAL THERAPY
- Orthotics
- Orthopedic Conditions
- Astym®
- Women’s Health
- Board Certified Orthopedics
- Athletic Training
- Early Intervention (Birth to 3 years)
- Custom Orthotic Trainer
- Vestibular Rehabilitation
- Running Biomechanics / Dartfish®
- Pediatric Program
- Aquatics
- Dry Needling
- Oncology Wellness Program
- LSVT (Parkinson’s Initiative)
- Blood Flow Restriction

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
- Custom Splinting
- Astym®
- Hand Rehabilitation
- Neurological Rehabilitation
- Handwriting
- Wheelchair Evaluations
- Certified Lymphedema Therapists
- LANA Certified (Lymphology Association of North America)
- Activities of Daily Living Training
- Early Intervention (Birth to 3 years)
- Pediatrics
- Oncology Wellness Program

SPEECH THERAPY
- LSVT (Lee Silverman Voice Treatment)
- Adult Speech & Language
- Pediatric Feeding & Swallowing
- Pediatric Speech & Language
- Early Intervention (Birth to 3 years)
- Auditory Processing
- Cognitive Therapy
- Vital Stim Therapy
- Oncology Wellness Program for Cognition & Swallowing
- McNeill Dysphagia Therapy Program (MDTP)
Unable to workout and lift weights without significant pain, David Mechling was motivated to repair his elbows and return to the regular exercise routine he once enjoyed.

“I was at a point of real frustration. I thought I would need surgery to repair my tendons.” said David of his bilateral medial epicondylitis (golfer’s elbow). David was referred to HSHS St. Anthony’s Physical Rehabilitation and Wellness for Occupational Therapy. Although he was apprehensive about therapy, he decided to give it a try.
Blood Flow Restriction Training (BFRT) is the brief and intermittent occlusion or restriction of arterial and venous blood flow that is performed by applying a tourniquet to the upper or lower extremity. BFRT has been found to augment skeletal muscle adaption, along with systemic whole body changes and cardiovascular benefits while at rest, with low intensity endurance exercises or low load resistance training. BFRT has been found to be safe when applied with pressures relative to the cuff with an individual limb circumference which is obtained through measuring limb occlusion pressures via a Doppler. 

Adopted by rehabilitation professionals, personal trainers, strength and conditioning coaches, Olympians, and serious athletes, BFRT is becoming a popular tool to improve muscle strength, size and functional aerobic capacity in shorter amounts of time with less stress on the body than typical training.

Practitioners began using BFRT in the treatment and recovery from musculoskeletal injuries or disabilities. Trainers and Coaches have used BFRT as an adjunct for a usual training regimen or as a tool to aid recovery. Whether it is used for rehabilitation, fitness, performance training or recovery, BFRT is a safe, effective, and portable solution for people of all ability levels and goals, including those with assigned bedrest with no ability to exercise to supplementing high-performance training.

At his Occupational Therapy evaluation, David presented with an eight out of ten pain rating in his left elbow. His right elbow, which did not hurt quite as bad, received a five out of ten pain rating.

David received seven Astym® treatments paired with left and right arm stretches, arm strengthening and grip/pinch strengthening. He followed his home exercise program and attended his Occupational Therapy sessions, which lasted around five weeks with 48 hours between visits.

At discharge from Occupational Therapy, David improved his left elbow pain level to two out of ten (with pain only during activity) and his right elbow pain level to zero out of ten.

“I feel Occupational Therapy healed my right elbow and made the pain in my left elbow much more tolerable. I am now able to work out and I have increased my weights and reps monthly. Things are going well,” David shared. He continued, “The occupational therapists were both very helpful and really into the process of healing my body. I couldn’t be happier with their work.”

David's therapists, Taylor Repking, OTR/L,CLT, Astym® Certified, and Nikki Probst, OTR/L, CLT, Astym® Certified, said, “It was a pleasure treating David for bilateral medical epicondylitis and we were very happy with his results. Great job, David!”

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AlterG® Anti-Gravity Treadmill System

The AlterG® anti-gravity treadmill allows patients and clients to train and recover from injury in ways previously thought impossible. Too many times patients cannot tolerate full weight-bearing, have balance problems, or have too much pain and their rehab and performance suffer. With the use of the AlterG®, patients can gain strength and endurance with decreased stress and fear by unweighting themselves through NASA-patented anti-gravity treadmill.

Patients can take as much as 80% of their body weight away and can adjust the weight in 1% increments to reduce impact to return to weight-bearing exercises sooner in the rehab process. Real-time gait analysis is also available with the AlterG® to improve gait mechanics and improve performance. From the athlete to the senior adult, all can benefit from use of the AlterG® treadmill and can get back to life faster!

Thank you to the Hospital Auxiliary and the HSHS St. Anthony’s Foundation for helping make this new treadmill available for our patients!