



# HARKNESS CENTER

*for Dance Injuries*

*A publication dedicated to the prevention and treatment of dance injuries*

**IN**  
Contact

HCDI Newsletter  
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## Understanding the Language of Dance

*by Elizabeth Moore*

When Pilobolus dancer Mark Fucik began experiencing pain in his shoulder, he was apprehensive about seeking medical care. According to Mark, many physicians do not understand the language of dance. "They nod like they know what you are talking about, but they do not understand." Upon hearing about his previous experiences, Fucik's fellow dancers recommended that he go to the Harkness Center for Dance Injuries (HCDI), a place where the healthcare professionals not only understand dance, but many are former dancers themselves.



*Mark Fucik with the Pilobolus Dance Theatre in TSU KU TKU*

At HCDI, Mark found his examination by David S. Weiss, MD, to be a unique experience. "Dr. Weiss explained what he was doing and why," says Fucik. "It can be frustrating and scary as a dancer when you don't know what is going on with your body. Dr. Weiss eased my frustration by giving me a thorough understanding of what my injury was and wasn't."

Winged or sickled; pronated or supinated. If dance and medicine are two different languages, Dr. Weiss is bilingual. Dr. Weiss attributes his understanding of the dance world to his extensive experience with dancers. "The more dancers you talk

with, the more you learn about the little things that they do," says Dr. Weiss. "You really must speak their language. I thank the dancers who have come to me over the years for teaching me."

Dr. Weiss, although not formally trained as a dancer, developed a love of dance while backstage observing dancers during performances. "Look what they're doing – it looks so easy," he recalls thinking. "This is something I would really like to do – to help these people."

As a medical student and resident, Dr. Weiss had the opportunity to study under dance medicine pioneers William Hamilton, MD, Justin Howse, FRCS, Marika Molnar, PT, and Shirley Hancock, MCSP. Dr. Weiss has gone on to serve as orthopaedist for The Juilliard School, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Paul Taylor Dance Company, Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Mark Morris Dance Group, Parsons Dance Company, Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, and Les Ballets Grandiva. "I probably have the most experience taking care of men dancing in pointe shoes of any physician in the world," he jokes. In addition, Dr. Weiss has been the consultant for more than a dozen Broadway productions, including, at present, *Wicked* and *Spamalot*.

Part of Dr. Weiss' success in treating dancers stems from the fact that he understands that each dancer's primary goal is to return to dancing as quickly as possible. "Dr. Weiss understands that

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## Harkness Goes to Sweden!



Several of the Harkness Center's staff members were selected by the Program Committee of the International Association for Dance Medicine and Science to make scientific presentations at the 15th Annual Meeting in Stockholm, Sweden. Dr. Donald Rose will present the Center's groundbreaking research findings on ACL injuries in dancers; Dr. David Weiss will present his study findings on the incidence, risk factors and management of injuries to professional modern dancers; Marijeanne Liederbach will present two original papers, the first a study of the EMG fatigue response of muscles in eumenorrhic, amenorrhic and male dancers and the second on injury surveillance systems for dance. In addition, she will also present the year-one progress report for the Research Committee's consensus project for standards in research which she Chairs. She is also participating in a panel discussing the measurement of turnout in dancers. And lastly, Megan Richardson will report on the topic of "how much dance medicine is enough," a paper describing an equation that helps dance organizations understand their needs for preventative and clinical dance medicine interventions.

***Harkness Center For Dance Injuries***  
***Quality Healthcare for the Dance Community***

# Pilobolus Dancer Finds Solace in HCDI's Team Approach



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## Dr. Weiss continued from page 1

there is a 'gray area' when returning to dance activities, while most doctors think it is 'cut and dry,'" Mark recalls. Although Dr. Weiss feels that it is sometimes necessary to prescribe a complete stop in activity, he tries to "use relative rest, meaning reduced activities, rather than absolute rest."



*Dr. Weiss examines a dancer during a dance clinic appointment*

Dr. Weiss prescribed physical therapy for Mark, with the goal of teaching him how to properly stabilize his shoulder during the athletic choreography required by Pilobolus. Mark received his treatment at the Harkness Center from Emily Sandow, MS, DPT, a former student at the School of American Ballet who has recently completed her Doctorate in Physical Therapy. After earning her undergraduate degree with a concentration in math, Sandow decided to study physical therapy because it combined her interests and talents in math, science, and movement. Upon graduation from Columbia University with a Masters in Physical Therapy, she accepted a position at the Hospital for Joint Diseases. Emily was later accepted into the Harkness Center's dance physical therapy mentorship program, which provided her the opportunity to work under the guidance of our senior dance physical therapy and athletic training team. Emily Sandow's training as a dancer played a beneficial role in her training as a physical therapist. She believes that she had an "innate understanding of movement even before physical therapy school." During her time at the Harkness Center, Emily has learned that an understanding of the dancer's environ-

ment and psychosocial factors is essential in order to facilitate recovery and safe return to work.

Strong team communication, which is the cornerstone of HCDI's model of patient care, was instrumental in Mark's recovery. The physician, physical therapist, and patient all communicate with one another on a regular basis to track the patient's progress, and to make adjustments to the treatment plan as needed. "This kind of interaction is critical to the dancer's healing process," says Dr. Weiss.

In Mark's case, the patient played a crucial role on his own recovery team. Two weeks into his therapy, he was scheduled to begin a tour. Mark needed to get as much information about his recovery as possible during those two weeks in order to continue treatment on the road. "Harkness was very accommodating," says Mark. "They really had an understanding of the dancer's schedule." To Mark, the Harkness Center understands what many of the previous healthcare professionals with whom he had worked did not. The team at the Harkness Center understands that dance is "your career — it's what you do."



*Emily Sandow, MS, DPT works with a dancer during a physical therapy session*

**About the Author:** Elizabeth Moore interned at HCDI during the summer of 2005. She holds a BFA from the Hartt School of the University of Hartford and an MFA from the University of California, Irvine. She is currently a full time faculty member at Alaska Dance Theatre in Anchorage, Alaska.

### There IS such a thing as too much ice!

If some ice is good, more is not necessarily better. Too much ice can do more harm than good. Prolonged exposure to ice can cause damage to nerves and soft tissue and result in serious injury. It is recommended that ice not be used for longer than 20 minutes at a time. Application of ice longer than 20 minutes results in a condition known as Hunter's Reaction, which causes the brain to think that part of the body is freezing and thus rushes blood into the area to warm it. This can increase inflammation in the injured area, which is the exact opposite effect of why you are applying ice in the first place!

Dancers should also be aware that frozen chemical ice packs should be applied for a maximum of 10 minutes to avoid frostbite. Direct skin contact with ice can be dangerous! Freezing of superficial sensory nerves can occur, resulting in long lasting loss of sensation. It is extremely important to place a layer of insulation between your skin and the ice pack, such as a towel, especially when using ice over bony areas, the sides and back of knees, groin, and underarms.



To reduce swelling wrap the insulated ice pack with an ace bandage and elevate above your heart



Theraband may break and cause injury if used to aid in stretching

### Don't stretch with your Theraband™!

Theraband, like all resistance band products, comes in varying degrees of strength. Many of the lighter weight resistances are not strong enough to support the weight of a relaxed limb during a stretch and can break causing it to snap and recoil quickly – possibly hitting you in the eye, face or other body area.

The elastic property of theraband tubing provides too much give for your muscle spindles to completely relax and reset in length. It is more effective to use non-elastic material such as a towel, belt, or yoga strap to achieve an optimum stretching response.

Be sure to hold every stretch for 60 seconds when going from a warm to cool body temperature to gain optimal lengthening of the muscle fibers.

Remember! Elastic bands and tubing become dried out after 6-8 months, increasing the risk they will break, and should be replaced regularly.

### Community Conference Calendar:

#### November 3-5, 2005: 15th Annual Meeting of the International Association for Dance Medicine and Science

November 6, 2005: Special Interest Groups Day

Organization: International Association for Dance Medicine and Science

Location: Stockholm, Sweden

Website: [www.iadms.org](http://www.iadms.org)

#### June 22-25, 2006: 23rd Annual Symposium on Medical Problems of Musicians & Dancers

Organization: Performing Arts Medicine Association

Location: Aspen, CO

Website: [www.artsmed.org](http://www.artsmed.org)

### HCDI Continuing Education Calendar:

#### July 2006: Principles of Dance Medicine and Management of the Dancer Patient

Organization: Harkness Center for Dance Injuries

Location: New York, NY

Website: [www.danceinjury.com](http://www.danceinjury.com)

Description: A three-day interactive course aimed at introducing the allied healthcare practitioner to the unique needs of the dancer. Certified athletic trainers and physical therapists will gain knowledge concerning the biopsychosocial factors affecting dancers and injury onset as well as the scientific and clinical basis for treatment management and prevention.

### Your support is key to our success...

Your support for the Harkness Center for Dance Injuries will assist this successful program in continuing to improve dancers' lives with the finest quality musculoskeletal care, free preventative screening, financial assistance for uninsured dancers, educational outreach and groundbreaking research.

If you wish to make a tax-deductible donation to the Harkness Center for Dance Injuries please make your contribution payable to: *Hospital for Joint Diseases-HCDI* and send to:

Harkness Center for Dance Injuries  
Hospital for Joint Diseases  
301 East 17th Street  
New York, NY 10003-3899



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## Harkness Center for Dance Injuries

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*Thanks Thanks Thanks Harkness Center for Dance Injuries Thanks Thanks Thanks*

### Our Affiliates

The Harkness Center for Dance Injuries would like to thank the directors of the following dance schools, companies and organizations for their collaboration with members of our staff:

- American Academy of Ballet
- American Dance Festival
- Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre
- Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
- City Center Theatre
- Cirque du Soleil
- Dance Theatre of Harlem
- Joffrey Ballet School
- Joyce Theatre
- Juilliard School
- La Cage Aux Folles
- Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo
- Mark Morris Dance Group
- Martha Graham Dance Company
- Merce Cunningham Dance Company
- Parsons Dance Company
- Paul Taylor Dance Company
- SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance
- Wicked the Musical

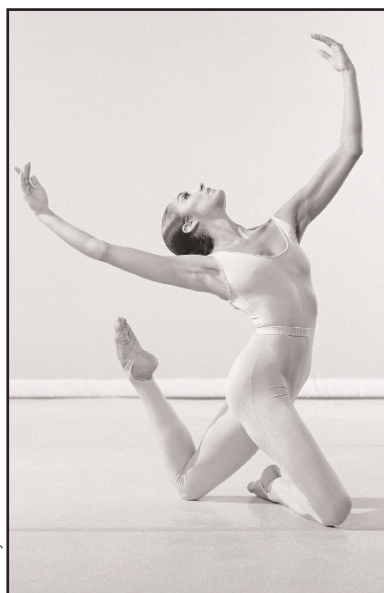


Photo by Beatriz Schiller

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!!**  
[www.danceinjury.com](http://www.danceinjury.com)

### Our Sponsors

Without the generosity of our supporters, programs such as our free injury prevention screening clinics, the Special Assistance Fund for dancers in financial need, our state-of-the-art research facility and our numerous off-site satellite centers would not be possible. With tremendous gratitude we thank the following organizations for their contributions to the Harkness Center for Dance Injuries:

- The Harkness Foundation for Dance
- The LuEsther T. Mertz Advised Fund of the New York Community Trust
- The Michel Fokine Memorial Fund of the New York Community Trust
- The Jacob and Valeria Langeloth Foundation
- The Falk Family
- The Esther Simon Charitable Trust
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- The Weinger Foundation



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