

How you could touch your toes after just a week

PEOPLE who cannot touch their toes could now do so after just one week – thanks to a major breakthrough in specialist therapy.

Research has shown that [half of the population cannot touch their toes](#), with experts blaming poor lifestyles causing the shortening of hamstring muscles. This can have serious consequences – from ankle and back pain to circulatory and arthritis problems.

All of this could change. A new [study published by Coventry University](#) has shown Bowen Technique treatment to have significantly increase hamstring flexibility – enabling people to reach or get much closer to touching their toes in only one week.

According to an expert in the mechanics of the human body, the study is a huge breakthrough for the flexibly challenged and therapists alike.

“This is the impossible dream for sports therapists, athletes and people who want to get fit,” explains Julian Baker, a teacher and practitioner of the Bowen Technique.

“Being able to touch your toes is not just a party trick – it can mean the difference between chronic pain and comfort.”

Established in Australia in the 1950s, the [Bowen Technique](#) involves therapists using their thumbs and forefingers to make rolling type moves across tendons and ligaments – ultimately removing pain and improving flexibility.

Julian said: “Changes to our lifestyle over the last century have caused shortened hamstrings and the increasing problem of being unable to touch our toes.

“But the impressive results from this university backed research prove that people can now touch reach them in super quick time, after just one Bowen Technique treatment.

“Ultimately this could help to reverse evolutionary bad habits and improve the nation’s health.”

The Bowen Technique is already a firm favourite with many celebrities – including the adventurer Bear Grylls, who after using it to recover from breaking his back during SAS parachute training, now describes himself as “hooked” on the therapy.

Coventry University confirmed the treatment to not just be a celebrity fad by tracking the physical progress of 116 people, whose hamstring performance was first measured electronically while performing a straight leg raise. They were then treated with the Bowen Technique before a second measurement seven days later. Nearly all were able to touch or get a lot closer to their toes after the one week break.

Julian added: “I’m astonished by the long-term effects of this therapy treatment.

“Achieving improvement in such a short time frame is an impressive result for any physical research.”

Hamstring problems are not only one of the most common and time-consuming injuries to treat in athletes; they are also indicated in back pain and sciatica.

Julian said the research endorsing the Bowen Technique could help reverse the annual cycle of thousands of people joining, then soon after, quitting the gym.

“For the high proportion of the UK population unable to touch its toes, even an introductory workout could induce levels of pain incurring long recovery periods,” said Julian.

“It’s unsurprising that many people who start going to the gym soon stop.

“Multiply this experience by a few sessions and it’s easy to understand why people stop feeling motivated to visit the gym.”

[Julian Baker](#) is the director of the European College of Bowen studies and a teacher and practitioner of the Bowen Technique. This treatment addresses body tension, allowing reduced pain and better movement. The treatment involves light rolling movements over

muscles, ligaments and tendons. Short breaks between moves are a feature of the technique which works by connecting the body's nervous systems, allowing the brain to regulate pain signals.

For more information on the Bowen Technique telephone Jackie Reader at Solar Health Clinic on 07899 957888.

Additional sources:

- [Adventurer Bear Grylls' battle with back pain and high cholesterol](#)

– Abstract from [The effects of the Bowen technique on hamstring flexibility over time: A randomised controlled trial](#) – summary of Coventry University, taken from subsequent publication in the Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies:

The hamstring muscles are regularly implicated in recurrent injuries, movement dysfunction and low back pain. Links between limited flexibility and development of neuromusculoskeletal symptoms are frequently reported. The Bowen Technique is used to treat many conditions including lack of flexibility. The study set out to investigate the effect of the Bowen Technique on hamstring flexibility over time.

An assessor-blind, prospective, randomised controlled trial was performed on 120 asymptomatic volunteers. Participants were randomly allocated into a control group or Bowen group. Three flexibility measurements occurred over one week, using an active knee extension test. The intervention group received a single Bowen treatment. A repeated measures univariate analysis of variance, across both groups for the three time periods, revealed significant within-subject and between-subject differences for the Bowen group. Continuing increases in flexibility levels were observed over one week. No significant change over time was noted for the control group. [Full paper](#)

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