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## **Banishing Back Pain Without Breaking The Bank**

Physical Therapy First Saves Companies and Patients Time and Money

ST PAUL, MN (January 17, 2007) – When it comes to back pain, going to a physical therapist first can significantly reduce patient downtime and cost of treatment. In fact, the savings in time and money can be as much as 50% over more traditional treatment routes which include visits to primary care doctors, expensive MRIs and x-rays, visits to orthopedic specialists and finally a trip to a physical therapist.

As healthcare costs continue to rise and a reform of the system is debated at the national level, healthcare providers have been forced to look at ways to become more cost-effective and efficient. Large employers such as Starbucks Corp. and Costco Wholesale Corp., have discovered that one major way to save employee healthcare dollars is to begin with physical therapy when treating a number of ailments including low back pain.

A recent (Jan. 12, 2007) article in the Wall Street Journal featured the novel plan implemented by Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle, Washington highlighting its solution to costly treatments for low back pain. Prior to the implementation of the plan, doctors at Virginia Mason's spine center followed no clear procedure or plan for the treatment of low back pain. Patients waited a month or more for an appointment then were bounced back and forth between specialists. In addition, they were subjected to expensive MRIs and other testing before eventually being sent to a physical therapist for treatment. It was only after treatment by a PT that patients saw results and found relief.

Unfortunately for patients, this type of medical approach is the norm according to Dr. John Groves, President of Groves Physical Therapy (Groves PT). "We have been saying for years that before trying expensive alternatives get patients into physical therapy first. You'll save millions of dollars and actually help the patient," said Dr. Groves. "The Wall Street Journal article highlights what we've been saying all along -- when it comes to low back pain, see your physical therapist first. It eliminates unnecessary tests, unproven surgeries; high costs and most importantly provide a successful outcome while decreasing the likelihood of symptoms returning."

According to the article, insurance provider Aetna is in discussions with several other large medical groups across the nation and looking at developing similar approaches to the problem of rising healthcare costs.

"At a time when our healthcare system is at its breaking point, all of us in the field should be looking at ways to improve efficiency while decreasing cost," said Dr. Groves. "Patient care will always come first, and as caretakers our responsibility includes providing the best care in the most efficient and cost effective way possible. I think you will see similar plans put in place by our area healthcare providers and facilities. It's inevitable if they are to stay afloat in a payment system that is so unbalanced."

For more information about how a physical therapist can help alleviate pain, minimize the use of prescription drugs and expensive diagnostic imaging, and prevent painful and costly

surgery, visit [www.grovespt.com](http://www.grovespt.com).

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**About Groves Physical Therapy:**

Groves Physical Therapy is a privately owned, multi-site Physical Therapy practice in St Paul and Brooklyn Center. Founded in 2004, their mission is to deliver the highest quality, evidence-based physical therapy management to patients with unquestionable ethics, unparalleled quality, superior service, and at the best value. Their physical therapists are Board Certified in Orthopedic Practice and are Fellowship trained in Manual Therapy, credentials that only 1-2% of Physical Therapists nationwide have obtained. They utilize manual physical therapy and therapeutic exercise based on the newest research to achieve the best results in fewer visits. For more information on Groves Physical Therapy, please call 651-209-6144 or 763-566-3798 or visit: [www.grovespt.com](http://www.grovespt.com).