

bodyworks
HEALTH CLINIC

Coast's leading physiotherapist

ESTELLE MITCHELL is widely recognised on the Costa del Sol as one of Spain's leading physiotherapists. Qualifying as a Chartered Physiotherapist in January 1978, having studied and trained with the RAF, Estelle has spent the last 10 years putting her wide and extensive experience to full use at the Bodyworks Health Clinic.

During a time when many expats are heading back to their native land Bodyworks Clinic has continued. So what makes Bodyworks Clinic so special?

Estelle laughs and shrugs: "I'm not sure I know the right answer to that question! I hope it's my expertise! I have invested heavily both in money and training to have treatment options that work. That's probably the biggest factor - my patients get better."

So what's the first step to getting better?

"A proper diagnosis. Understanding the real problem that's causing pain and not just treating the symptoms. I was trained before we could rely so heavily on MRIs and other pictures, so we had to accurately diagnose the issue through detailed assessments of the person standing in front of us. For me, getting the diagnosis right means you are 80 per cent there."

"You have to really understand what is going on within the body to treat it effectively. In my opinion too many doctors rely on MRIs to diagnose and don't properly assess the patient, so they only get half the story."

I have to comment on the fact that while everyone respects Estelle she is notoriously controversial, her treatment plans often differ significantly from those prescribed by GPs and surgeons.

"For me, this is the downside to not working in the UK, where physiotherapy is a highly qualified profession. Here physiotherapists aren't usually trained to the same high standard, they aren't permitted to make their own diagnosis, the doctor tells them how to treat and how often! The methods I use have proven, clinical results, they are new, but accepted in the UK. However here

in Spain they can appear very controversial!"

I ask her to tell me more about these controversial new treatments. "In my opinion, surgery should always be the last resort. I find it frustrating that someone has seen a 'specialist' without realising that their specialism is surgery and they have been given a surgical opinion."

This passion for non-surgical options and obsession with educating herself on the latest techniques led Estelle to her unusual, but highly effective, Magnetic Resonance Therapy. A derivative of the technology used in MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) scans, this therapy actually helps to regenerate ligaments, tendons, cartilage and bone. It dramatically reduces pain and inflammation in each and every joint in the body including those in the spine, whether it's caused by long term arthritis or recent injury. It is a 'big gun' in Estelle's arsenal against the surgery, cartilage rotting cortisone injections and heavy duty anti-inflammatories offered by many doctors. The statistics are impressive, "When we looked at MRT the clinical trials were showing a 75 per cent success rate, when you compare this to the 3 per cent success rate for arthroscopies (surgery for minor arthritis) this is amazing. Because I combine this with other treatments to support it, my results are more like 90 per cent success." Estelle is rightly proud of the growing book of testimonials she has from happy patients.

So does she rely on technology for these results?

"Oh, I'm probably quite old fashioned in some ways, while the technology is fantastic I view it as a tool to make my hands-on work more effective. There is no substitute for years of training and experience." Ten years is quite an achievement on the Costa del Sol. I wondered what Estelle had in mind for the next 10 years?

"I wish I had the answer to that question too! I love being a physiotherapist and have had the chance to work with so many amazing people, both my wonderful patients here in Spain and my colleagues in the UK. There is still so much I want to learn. Having Bodyworks has given me the freedom to expand my knowledge and expertise so I'm getting the results my patients want. That's amazingly satisfying. What's next? Whatever helps get even better results!"

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Estelle celebrating the 10th anniversary of Bodyworks.