

Eli's Rehab Report

NEWS BRIEFS: Lab Coat Debate Brings Safety Into the Picture

Think your PTs should wear lab coats for a good impression? A growing buzz that lab coat sleeves are responsible for spreading infections has put even the American Medical Association to a tough decision. The AMA House of Delegates is pushing to ban lab coats in hospital settings, according to the June 19 issue of PT Bulletin Online.

This issue has therapists alert as well. "I use my lab coat to have my clients watch the lines of my coat when I walk down my hallway to observe the pleats and the diagonals as we do a dynamic gait analysis," commented physical therapist **Stacy Barrows** on the Wall Street Journal Blog.

Lab coats have also helped PTs gain respect. "There was a study when I was in PT school that stated the longer the coat, the more the patient listened... however, I prefer to wear it sparingly because I do prefer to be looked at as a side-by-side teacher, and the coat interferes with this," Barrows continued.

"Are lab coats appropriate 'professional' attire for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants? Could they endanger patients?" the Bulletin asks. The American Physical Therapy Association encourages therapists to weigh in on its blog at <http://movingforwardapta.blogspot.com/>.