

Inversion therapy has been used to relieve back pain as early as 400 BC when Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, strung up a patient on a ladder with ropes and pulleys and allowed gravity to do its work. The concept of inversion was not widely recognized in the United States, however, until Dr. Robert Martin (a California osteopath, chiropractor and medical doctor) introduced the "Gravity Guidance System" in the 1960's. This revolutionary concept addressed the effects of gravity on the human body, the simple solution of inversion therapy, and the resulting benefits.

Dr. Martin had a "marketable personality." He was devoted to communicating the benefits of postural exchange including inversion, and the public responded well to his sincerity and honesty. Dr. Martin appeared on talk shows, and was featured in popular publications like The Wall Street Journal.

Dr. Robert Martin, Jr. published a book in the late 1970's. Together with the Gravity Guidance Inversion Table, the program caught on, experiencing increasing success. This encouraged other companies to enter the inversion market-products like the Bud Leach table and the BackSwing emerged. Gravity boots were popularized by the 1980 movie "American Gigolo" starring Richard Gere. By 1982, the inversion market had soared to over \$70 million, with literally thousands of people incorporating inversion regularly into their lifestyle.

Success comes with a price, however. Before soon, over forty manufacturers were producing inversion products. There was little differentiation between the products, which caused price wars among the companies. Some manufactures sacrificed quality so that they could offer cheaper products. The lack of attention to quality resulted in product failures, causing serious, sometimes deadly, harm to consumers.

Also, a medical study published in 1983 by Dr. Goldman and colleagues showed that inverted patients experienced an increase in blood pressure and internal eye pressure. The media widely reported the study, warning that stroke was a potential result of inversion.

Two years following the inversion study, Dr. Goldman reversed his original position, stating, "New research shows that you are at no more of a stroke risk hanging upside down than if you are exercising right side up." More in-depth research found that the body actually has mechanisms that prevent damage from hanging upside down. In fact, while oscillating (inverting with movement), some of the patients' blood pressure actually dropped a few points. Experienced inverters also showed slower heart rates while inverted than when upright. (\*Note: these studies were based on patients in generally good health. Make sure you review contraindications prior to inverting.)

Dr. Goldman stated that the warnings to the public about the dangers of inversion were "grossly inflated" and that in the 15 years these devices have been in use, there has not been one single stroke or cardiovascular incident documented. Note from Teeter Hang Ups: After 36 years, to the best of our knowledge this statement still remains valid.

Other universities, including Marquette, Iowa, and Portland studied inversion during this time, with results that vindicated Inversion as no more dangerous than other common fitness activities.

Unfortunately, the damage had already been done. The poor quality equipment combined with misunderstandings of health risks resulted in a decline of consumer confidence in inversion products. Inversion went from a multi-million dollar market to one that struggled to survive. The use of Inversion therapy shrank to virtually exclusive use by a few "in the know", including chiropractors, physical therapists, sports trainers and professional athletes. Of the forty plus manufacturers in business in the early 1980's, Hang Ups was the only company to continuously promote inversion products to present.

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After a number of years fighting to rebuild the reputation of Inversion therapy, Teeter Hang Ups has witnessed tremendous growth in the use of inversion products in the late nineties. Inversion fits well with the “whole body wellness” trend that has evolved in the U.S. recently, and has become widely recognized as an effective and viable form of natural therapy. The wide-ranging benefits of Inversion apply to all age ranges and fitness levels.

In fact, after several years of evaluation, the US Army Physical Fitness School has decided to incorporate Inversion into its world-wide physical training doctrine. The Army Rangers at Fort Benning, GA use gravity boots to invert, “reversing” the damage done to their bodies during their demanding training. To them, Inversion represents the “Quiet Side of Fitness”—a restorative fitness tool to help decompress and mobilize joints to prevent injuries. Soldiers use gravity boots to stretch while inverted, moving joints through their full range of motion.

Synonymous with “Inversion,” the Teeter Hang Ups name is widely recognized all over the world as a quality supplier of inversion products. Teeter Hang Ups Inversion products have helped literally thousands of people improve their quality of life.

