

BU research aims to straighten gaits

Mass High Tech: The Journal of New England Technology

A Boston University professor has developed a robotics device designed to help prevent hip damage created by an incorrect gait. The goal is to correct a healthy patient's walking gait early on so osteoarthritis doesn't develop later in life, according to Cara Lewis, an assistant professor of physical therapy at BU's Sargent College of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences.

The pneumatically powered device is an exoskeletal brace attached to the user's hips and waist. Motion-capture cameras record the user's movements using reflective markers placed on the body while electrodes measure muscle activity. Users walk on a custom treadmill that has two plates for measuring the force from each foot separately.

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