significance ($p<0.001$). These results challenge the assumption that expensive equipment-based treatments necessarily provide superior outcomes to simpler active interventions.

The mechanisms underlying Eldoa's superiority likely involve multiple factors absent in passive mechanical decompression. The active muscle engagement required to maintain Eldoa positions creates neuromuscular re-education that addresses the motor control deficits often accompanying disc pathology. The proprioceptive input from sustained positioning helps restore normal movement patterns disrupted by pain and dysfunction. The psychological empowerment of actively participating in treatment contrasts with the passive dependency mechanical decompression might foster. Additionally, the ability to perform Eldoa independently provides ongoing management tools, while mechanical decompression requires continued access to expensive equipment. The specificity possible with Eldoa positioning allows targeted decompression at symptomatic levels without affecting stable segments, whereas mechanical decompression typically applies non-specific traction throughout the lumbar spine. These findings position Eldoa as a cost-effective, empowering alternative to equipment-based decompression for appropriate patients.

Meditation

The comparison between meditation and Eldoa reveals interesting parallels and important distinctions in their approaches to mind-body integration and physiological regulation. Meditation demonstrates well-established benefits for autonomic function, with consistent findings of increased heart rate variability, reduced cortisol levels, and improved emotional regulation. Long-term practitioners show structural brain changes including increased gray matter density in regions associated with attention, emotional regulation, and sensory processing. These documented benefits provide a benchmark for understanding what rigorous research into contemplative practices can reveal, highlighting the current gap in Eldoa investigation.

While Eldoa shares meditation's emphasis on sustained attention and breath awareness, its addition of challenging physical positions creates a different neurophysiological stimulus. The proprioceptive demands of maintaining precise positioning while managing the sensation of sustained stretch requires a form of focused attention similar to meditation but directed toward somatic rather than mental phenomena. Some practitioners describe Eldoa as "meditation in motion" or "embodied mindfulness," recognizing the contemplative quality that emerges from sustained positional holds. The potential for Eldoa to provide similar autonomic benefits to meditation remains theoretical without direct measurement, but the combination of sustained attention, controlled breathing, and parasympathetic activation through stretching suggests overlapping mechanisms. Future research comparing physiological markers between meditation and Eldoa practice could reveal whether the physical component enhances or detracts from the regulatory benefits of contemplative practice.

Mesentery