

IS YOUR STRESS A PAIN IN THE NECK?

PHYSICAL THERAPY
BRINGS NATURAL,
DRUG-FREE RELIEF!



Healthy Recipe:
Caprese Salad

Staff Spotlight:
Dayton Marti

Patient
Success Story

INSIDE:

• HEALTHY RECIPE:
CAPRESE SALAD

• STAFF SPOTLIGHT:
DAYTON MARTI

• PATIENT
SUCCESS STORY

IS YOUR STRESS A PAIN IN THE NECK?

PHYSICAL THERAPY BRINGS NATURAL, DRUG-FREE RELIEF!



A MESSAGE FROM DR. CHRISTIAN, DPT

Cervical Spine Pain. Neck pain is a near-universal issue that affects many people for a variety of reasons. Whether your neck pain began with whiplash from a car wreck, a night of sleeping "wrong," or from just plain old stress, chronic neck pain can greatly affect our livelihoods. As many of us already know, the amount of stress in our lives can correlate with pain. Neck and shoulder pain are classic examples of areas where stress tends to manifest. Sometimes the best place to start when treating neck pain is to manage our stress levels. Daily meditation, practicing gratitude for the things in our life that bring us joy, and participating in our favorite outdoor activities can certainly help reduce stress levels and, as a result, decrease our neck pain.

Though these activity changes can help with pain, sometimes the issue is more musculoskeletal in nature. There may be a lack of spacing between the bones in your neck. This can create tension

and even headaches that make participating in daily life activities very challenging. A lack of muscular stability in the neck can also create very uncomfortable compensations. This causes some muscles in your neck to work very hard and other neck muscles to hardly work at all. After a while, the imbalance can lead to certain regions of the neck becoming very stiff and irritated.

Of course, we can't talk about neck pain without discussing posture. Many people, including myself, were told growing up to "stand up tall" and "don't let your neck droop forward." While there is certainly merit in maintaining good posture, the latest research shows that sitting with poor posture may be okay for short periods of time. Where the creation of pain begins is *prolonged* sitting with poor posture. So, if you tend to sit in front of a computer or television with less-than-ideal posture for hours on end, challenge yourself to work in some movement. A great place to start is taking "standing rest breaks" every half hour to break out of that "bad" posture. Remember, movement is our friend!

HOW STRESS CAUSES NECK PAIN

Do you notice your neck seems to hurt more when you are stressed? Do you find yourself rubbing your neck after a difficult day on the job? You might be suffering from stress-related neck pain. During times of high stress and anxiety, our muscles tense up. As muscles tighten, the more pressure and pain they cause.

The pain and tension can interfere with our ability to work and do our daily activities. It can also interfere with the enjoyment of your life including recreational activities and spending time with friends and family.

The good news is that with guidance from your physical therapist you can find solutions to your pain and how to manage your stress, so you can get back to living the life you enjoy!

WHAT IS CAUSING MY NECK PAIN?

Our neck does not like to remain in any one position for extended periods, like when you're driving, looking down at your phone, or using a computer. Too often the posture we hold our neck is also contributing to our pain.

Prolonged sitting can lead to a forward head position resulting in tension to soft tissue (i.e. muscles, tendons, and ligaments) or negative changes to our blood flow.

The muscles of our neck function at their best when we move them. So holding our heads in one position leads to irritation of the muscles and affects your ability to move your head and neck. This loss of mobility leads to pain and less enjoyment of your daily activities.

HOW DOES STRESS CAUSE NECK PAIN?

Stress-induced neck pain is fairly common. The effects of stress on the body include the release of stress hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol, that when elevated for long durations, are associated with increased pain sensitivity. The more stress we experience the more likely we will also experience pain.

While chronic stress alone can trigger neck pain, a few factors can make it worse. Office environments tend to create neck pain problems. Modern offices confine people to chairs, poor posture, and little mobility.

In addition, a lot of people also spend a lot of time driving with poor posture and added stress due to traffic and road rage. The combination of all of these factors makes your chances of stress-related neck pain higher.

HOW PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN HELP MY NECK PAIN

Neck pain can be alleviated with physical therapy. Neck pain is often caused by poor postural habits or sustained positions. Relief of this pain typically occurs immediately following the correction of the abnormal postures. An easy way to find good posture is to imagine your breast bone is lifted towards the sky. This will naturally cause your spine to straighten out – lifting you. This helps alleviate the tension immediately and is something you can do multiple times of day!

Physical therapists can target your pain's source by examining your symptoms. Then, they can offer exercises that stretch and/or relax your neck muscles.

For example, sit in a chair with your back resting against the rest and simply lean your chest and shoulder back (i.e. over the top of the backrest). Keep your eyes forward and lean straight back. This is called a neck retraction and is very effective at alleviating tension!

In some cases, manual techniques including mobilizations or therapeutic massage are used to alleviate your pain and allow you to tolerate stretching. A custom-tailored program of neck exercises will assure your neck stays loose, limber, and healthy.

Your physical therapist can also teach you how to arrange your working environment ergonomically and recommend various stress reduction strategies to ensure healthy life behavior.

CONTACT OUR CLINIC TODAY

If you're dealing with neck pain, you're not alone. Call our office today, and schedule an assessment. Even if your neck pain is caused by stress, it still needs attention. We'll work side by side with your goals, creating the proactive, effective programs you need to achieve mobility once more. We offer the results you are looking for!

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6723111/>; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2270377/>; <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30969542/>; <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28972599/>



STAFF Spotlight

Dayton Marti
Practice Manager

Dayton Marti is our Practice Manager. He has more than 15 years of experience in various areas of the medical field including emergency medicine, wound care, men's health, and weight loss. He received his Bachelors in Biology with a Minor in Chemistry from the University of Central Oklahoma. With his experience, he has helped develop new treatment programs with a focus on high-quality patient care. During his time off, he enjoys reading, cooking and spending time with his wife and dogs.

HEALTHY RECIPE: CAPRESE SALAD



Balsamic Vinaigrette

- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 2 tbsps balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp ground mustard
- 1/8 tsp each, salt & pepper

Salad

- 4 medium tomatoes, sliced
- 1/4 c fresh basil leaves
- 1/2 lb fresh mozzarella cheese, sliced

Arrange the tomatoes, cheese and basil on a serving platter. Whisk the vinaigrette ingredients; drizzle over salad. If desired, sprinkle with additional salt and pepper.

<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/caprese-salad/>



Patient Success Story

“I have never met such an awesome and caring staff.

My range of motion is so much better. I am back on the bike again. The staff is so caring when it comes to your health.”

— Lenora J.



We want to hear *YOUR* success story!

Leave a review for our practice and help us connect with the community! Visit <https://l.ead.me/bd9lrm> or scan the QR code to leave us a Google review!



EXERCISE TO TRY AT HOME

DEEP NECK FLEXOR ACTIVATION IN SUPINE

Stretches neck

Start by lying flat on your back with your head relaxed. Place your fingertips gently on the front of your neck and make sure you do not feel your surface muscles activating. Tuck your chin down toward your chest slowly without activating your surface neck muscles. Slowly untuck your chin. Repeat 3 sets, 10 reps each.



Not all exercises are appropriate for every person. Please consult with a healthcare provider before starting.

AVOID KNEE REPLACEMENT *with* AARP

The Advanced Arthritis Relief Protocol™ (AARP) is a non-surgical, FDA-approved treatment for osteoarthritis pain that is covered by Medicare and most commercial insurances. It combines gel injections, physical therapy, bracing, and expert guidance. It is an excellent alternative to knee replacement surgery, helping to delay or even prevent the need for total knee replacement. The AARP combines these powerful techniques:

- **Viscosupplementation.** Gel-like substances are injected into a joint to supplement your natural synovial fluid, resulting in a 92.7% success rate in alleviating osteoarthritis pain.

- **Fluoroscopy.** We look inside your joints in real time, helping ensure the injection is in the correct location for the best results.

- **Physical Therapy.** We combine personalized PT programs with a cutting-edge unloading knee brace.

FREE CONSULTATION. Start your journey towards a pain-free life by contacting us today for a free, personalized knee evaluation!

Watch our **FREE WEBINAR** to learn more about The Advanced Arthritis Relief Protocol. Scan the QR code to view.



DON'T IGNORE YOUR PAIN. COME BACK TO JRC!

Has Your Pain Returned?

Call today to schedule an appointment!

918.205.2608

JOINT
RESTORATION CENTER

JointRestorationCenter.com