



THE PHYSICAL THERAPY SPECIALTY CENTER

a division of Primary Care Partners

NEWSLETTER

May 2023 Volume 3 / Issue 5

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ARTHRITIS AWARENESS MONTH

May is arthritis awareness month. Arthritis is often thought of as a “dooms day sentence” in the fact that you just have it, there is nothing you can do about it, and it will ruin your life of activity forever. This is not true however, and there are many ways physical therapy (PT) and occupational therapy (OT) can help to manage pain, assist with activity modification, improve strength and mobility, and address many other aspects of daily function. Arthritis is extra bone build-up that occurs when “stress” is put on those bones. The bones react to that stress by creating more bone. It is true that PT and OT cannot physically go in to the joints and bones affected with arthritis and change the extra bone growth that has occurred over time, however we can change how the muscles, tendons, and joints deal with this extra boney growth.

Arthritis is an inflammatory process that occurs in joints which can lead to pain. Arthritis itself is slow growing over time and can cause stiffness in these joints. People often have pain that appears to happen suddenly and attribute this to arthritis. This is likely not the true cause of your pain, because arthritis does not show up overnight but it can contribute to your pain. It is likely due to a musculature issue that can be addressed with PT or OT.

If you are interested in how we can help you manage your pain or even your arthritis give us a call today and see how we can help. Also, check out our featured blog this month regarding arthritis and specifics with OT management of arthritis.

AROUND THE CLINIC:

Have you met Andrew Eastep? Andrew joined our practice in March as our staff physical therapist assistant. He is amazing and very knowledgable in all things physical therapy and injury recovery realms. You may have already had the pleasure of working with him or may be seeing him off and on along with your physical therapist to coordinate your treatment plan. Please take a minute to say “Hi” and make him feel welcome. You can check out his bio on our website and find out more about Andrew.

 (970) 241-5856



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Spotlight Diagnosis of the Month

Diagnosis: CMC (carpometacarpal) thumb joint pain

What is it: As we age, the cartilage in our joints start to wear allowing the bones to rub together. This can cause pain and decreased mobility of the wrist and hand. One area of the body that is used for almost everything we do, is the carpometacarpal or commonly known as the CMC joint. This is located where the thumb meets the wrist. The cartilage surrounding the joint begins to break down resulting in pain, weakness and decreased range of motion. The cartilage acts as a cushion for the joints so the bones do not rub together.

This section is to provide details about commonly seen diagnoses or injuries in our clinic and how Therapy may help.

Common Symptoms:

- Pain at the base of the thumb
- Other signs may include redness surrounding the joint, stiffness and swelling.
- Difficulty in grasping, pinching and perform fine motor tasks
- Some people develop a bony nodule near the thumb joint.
 - Activities that increase thumb pain:
 - Over use
 - Pressure on the thumb
 - Repetitive motion
 - Sustained holding
 - Vibration
 - Extended time in the cold

How OT can help: Occupational therapy treatment includes heat/cold to decrease pain/stiffness, a home exercise program to improve range of motion/strength, splints and braces, address swelling, education in joint protection, pacing and energy conservation. Instruction in the use of adaptive equipment and modifications in performing daily activities.



Appointment reminders:

We have transitioned to electronic appointment reminders. A text message will be sent to the cell phone number we have on file 48 hours before your appointment. You will also receive an email if you have one on file. If you are not receiving these reminders or have questions, please stop by the front desk to ensure we have all of your up to date contact information.

