



THE PHYSICAL THERAPY SPECIALTY CENTER

a division of Primary Care Partners

NEWSLETTER

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HEADACHE RELIEF WITH PHYSICAL THERAPY

Headaches are one of the most common pain conditions reported by adults. Headaches can affect our daily lives and challenge our ability to perform our normal daily tasks. Physical therapy is one of many treatment options for chronic headaches. If you have struggled with chronic headaches and have had minimal relief with other treatments, consider reaching out to our office to be evaluated by one of our many physical therapists. For more on this topic, check out our featured blog this month and see how physical therapy may help your headaches and so much more! Head over to our website, and you can find it under the blogs tab!

AROUND THE CLINIC:

It is New Year's Resolution Time! Instead of making unattainable and lofty standards for yourself, try to make short term goals you would like to try and achieve throughout the year to attain one main goal by the end of the year. Many goals set by individuals at the start of the year include a healthier lifestyle. This can look daunting if you set your sights too high initially, so try to set "quarterly goals" that are attainable. The first one could be eating at least one serving of veggies at least 5 days a week. Then the next "quarterly goal" may be to continue to eat those veggies and add some form of physical activity for at least 15 minutes a day, 5 days a week. And so on! Also, give yourself some grace. If you don't reach your goals, that is okay. We all have areas that will be challenging, but looking at the overall achievements instead of the pitfalls will keep you motivated instead of making you want to give up! Happy New Years and Happy Goal setting!

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Spotlight Diagnosis of the Month

Diagnosis: Cervical radiculopathy

What is it? Cervical radiculopathy is commonly referred to as a “pinched nerve” in the upper body or upper extremity. It occurs when a nerve in the neck is compressed or irritated, and can lead to pain, numbness, and other such problems. The problem is generally caused by structures in the cervical spine putting pressure on the nerve roots as they course out of the neck and away from the spinal cord. Cervical radiculopathy is often caused by wear and tear on structures in the cervical spine, such as a bulging disc or even arthritic changes in the neck that encroach into the area where the nerve root exits the cervical spine. In more rare occurrences, it can be caused by a herniated disc in the cervical spine from trauma. Cervical radiculopathy can sometimes be diagnosed by symptom report, but it may also require an MRI to see the exact root of the pain.

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

Symptoms:

- Pain that starts in the neck and radiates down the arm
- Numbness, tingling, or feeling of pins and needles into the arm and hand
- Weakness in the muscles of the arm, shoulder, and hand
- Loss of sensation in the arm or hand
- Pain is often produced during specific neck motions and can even be alleviated with other neck motions

How can physical therapy help?

90% of the time, conservative management (i.e. physical therapy) is appropriate to treat the symptoms and underlying root cause of the radiculopathy. Physical therapy will address the pain with a combination of manual techniques as well as stretching and possibly the use modalities (better known as the feel good things). The physical therapist will also teach patients exercises to help alleviate the pressure on the nerve root with certain stretches and neck motion. If appropriate, a physical therapist may use a device known as traction, which can be done either manually or with a mechanical traction unit. Both methods are designed to decompress the cervical spine and create a negative pressure gradient to allow for a cervical disc to be pulled back toward the center of the disc and away from the nerve root, therefore relieving the painful symptoms as well as the numbness and tingling. Most people recover well and return to their normal activities without issues.

Please confirm your appointments electronically so we know you are coming, and please continue to call our office if you need to reschedule. We have a \$50 no show/less than 24 hour cancelation fee.

