THE PHYSICAL THERAPY SPECIALTY CENTER
a division of Primary Care Partners

NEWSLETTER

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PHYSICAL THERAPY VS. MASSAGE THERAPY: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Physical therapy and massage therapy both offer valuable benefits, although they are designed for different purposes. Physical therapy focuses on rehabilitation, movement, and long-term recovery, while massage therapy emphasizes relaxation and short-term muscle relief. The primary difference between physical therapy and massage therapy comes down to the overall goal of treatment. If you're unsure which option is right for you, speaking with a healthcare professional can help determine the best path based on your symptoms, lifestyle, and goals.

AROUND THE CLINIC:

Did you know that we can text you for available openings if you are on our waitlist? We have found that sometimes texting is easier for people than answering a phone call. So, we have implemented using texting patients when cancellations occur on our schedules. We did start utilizing this a couple months ago and it has been received well. We want to make you aware of this new option in case you see a text come across from our office stating that we have an opening available. The text states "Hello (Patient's name), this is the Physical Therapy Specialty Center. (provider) has an opening today at (or date and time). Please reply to this message or call as soon as possible at 970-241-5856 to see if this appointment is still available. Thank you." If you see a text like this come through on your phone, it is on a first come first serve basis. You can respond via text with a yes if you would like the appointment, or a no if it does not work for you. You can also call our office when you get the text and respond that way. We are trying to provide better communication and fill spots more rapidly with less disruption to your busy day. The text feature does not allow cancellations of your appointments, you still need to call the clinic for those circumstances. If you have further questions about this new feature, you can ask our front office, they would be glad to help you.

Spotlight Diagnosis of the Month

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

Diagnosis: Thoracic Outlet Syndrome (TOS)

What is it?

Thoracic outlet syndrome (TOS) is a disorder where a nerve or blood vessel in the upper body gets trapped or “impinged” (i.e. pinched) somewhere in the neck/shoulder, as it courses down into the arm, causing an array of symptoms from pain, to numbness and even weakness. There can be several causes; muscular impingement, rib/collar bone impingement, or even impingement from trauma. 80% of cases with TOS have a neurogenic component that is preceded by some kind of neck trauma. This condition occurs more often in women, there is generally a postural component that is contributing to the nerve entrapment, and is often exacerbated by overhead work and activities.

Common Symptoms

- Pain in neck, shoulder, and/or arm
- Numbness or tingling in upper extremity
- Weakness in hand
- If blood vessels are involved you may get a change in temperature in the arm/hand or a change in color due to lack of blood flow

How Physical Therapy Can Help:

Physical therapy is generally the number one treatment recommended for patients who are struggling with thoracic outlet syndrome. Due to the nature of this condition, which can be caused by multiple different factors, it is important for us as physical therapists, to assess what is actually causing the neural impingement and then come up with a plan of care that is appropriate to treat the root cause of the condition. Most cases tend to have a postural strength imbalance component, which we address with focused strengthening to address the deficits. Likewise, for the nerve symptoms, the plan of care will isolate the nerve or nerves involved and work on gliding those nerves to improve their mobility and decrease the irritability. This can be a challenging diagnosis to treat, due to the multi-factor attributes, to restore complete function and relieve symptoms. We are thoroughly prepared to address any and all aspects of this condition to get everyone back to their lives, without pain and numbness.

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.