

ACTIVE P.T. SOLUTIONS
...BECAUSE LIFE
SHOULD BE ACTIVE

APTS Monthly



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Office Hours:

Monday -

8:30am - 5:30pm

Tuesday -

8:30am - 7:00pm

Wednesday -

8:30am - 5:30pm

Thursday -

8:30am - 5:30pm

Friday -

8:30 - 4:00pm

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Why Does My Neck Hurt & What Can I Do About It?

A day doesn't go by that I don't hear someone say, "my neck hurts". With this, you can see many individuals standing in line at the grocery store rubbing their neck and hoping that this "self massage" will make the pain go away. Or perhaps they will reach for their favorite over the counter "pain pill" or the 21st century version of "mothers little helper", to quote The Rolling Stones. This seems to be more and more common. There are many reasons for this increase in neck pain among the technologically advanced countries such as the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, etc.

According to the University of Illinois, more than 50% of adults have had neck pain during the past year; the incidence of neck pain is increasing in younger ages; females, people who sit at a desk all day, and smokers tend to suffer from neck pain proportionately more; and people with chronic neck pain use the health system twice as much as the rest of the population.

It is common knowledge that technology has infiltrated our society and our lives in almost every facet, from work to home and social life. Regardless of one's socioeconomic status, technology has found its way into our lives. While many people want to put the blame squarely on electronic games, there are many other influences that take up much more of our time, such as television, home computers, laptop computers, cellular telephones, and the list goes on! Electronics in their current form

cause us to utilize what is known in the ergonomic world as a "head down posture". It is the chronic use of this head down posture that results in not only increased incidence of neck pain but earlier onset of neck pain during our life span.

If you want a visual of the "head down posture", all you have to do is look out your window and watch someone walking down the street or go to the mall and, within 30 seconds, you will see someone walking and looking "down" into their "smart" phone. This is the quintessential "head down posture". This same posture can be seen in the coffee shop as someone working on his or her laptop or working on his or her desktop computer at home. Having your head down for extended periods of time puts significant amount of stress on the neck. When you combine this with long periods of inactivity, the formula is weakness plus stress equals pain.

Neck pain caused by poor posture is simply explained as follows: in an upright position, the spinal vertebrae support the weight of the head. Once the head is flexed forward (for instance, while using a laptop), the vertebrae no longer support the weight of the head as much. The muscles, tendons, and ligaments of the neck and upper back work harder to hold up the head, which is roughly the weight of a bowling ball, or 8-12 pounds. Over time, the muscles and other soft tissues in the neck tighten up due to the excessive workload required to hold the head in this "forward head" position. The muscles in the front of

the neck become weak from being chronically stretched, and nerve structures are sustained in positions of increased tension. This chronic overload and tightening of the soft tissues may eventually result in reduced blood flow and oxygen to the soft tissues, ultimately causing pain. Additionally the forward head posture will place the neck joints in abnormal positions, which may eventually cause joint pain and muscle weakness. The above scenario will usually manifest as tension headaches and painful "knotty" spots in the neck and upper trapezius muscles (the muscles that run from the neck to the shoulder). It may feel as though just holding up the head is difficult, i.e. the head "feels too heavy for my neck." Because of this heavy feeling, the person may maintain a slouched posture, which continues the recurring pain cycle.

Some suggestions for preventing posture-related neck pain include correcting your posture when standing or sitting, adjusting your pelvic position, lifting your chest gently, nodding your chin slightly, and relaxing your shoulders. Ensure your workstation is set up to help you sit properly. Stretch and change position frequently while you are working. Try not to sleep on your stomach, which overextends your neck. Choose a urethane or down pillow for neck support while you sleep. Combat the muscle-tightening effects of stress with relaxation techniques.

Exercise of the Month: Supine Open Book



Supine Open Book:
start position (top),
end position (bottom)

This exercise is great for posture, which includes the neck, shoulders, and shoulder blades. Postural exercises are best done as fewer repetitions multiple times a day so that you work and “wake up” the musculature more than once during a 24-hour time period.

To start, lie face up with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Roll a towel about 3 inches in diameter and place it under the curve of your neck. Position your arms at your sides with your palms facing up.

To perform the exercise, squeeze your shoulder blades together, down towards the floor, aiming for your waist. Be sure not to shrug your shoulders up toward your ears. Once you get a good squeeze, hold for 1-2 seconds and then relax. Repeat 10-15 times, and perform two different times a day.

When you combine poor posture with long periods of inactivity, the formula is weakness + stress = pain.

Why Does My Neck Hurt & What Can I Do About It? Con't

Exercise regularly to improve muscle tone and posture. Avoid prolonged time spent texting with your head looking down. If your neck pain has lasted more than 30 days, you should seek evaluation from your medical doctor, chiropractor, or physical therapist. Remember time is money; the longer you wait, the more it costs!

Article by Dale Buchberger, DC, PT, CSCS

Chamber of Commerce Business After Five

On Tuesday evening, January 20, Active Physical Therapy Solutions hosted a Business After Five networking event at our brand new office. This social gathering is the Chamber's premier networking event, and it allows members of the

business community to meet, exchange ideas, and talk business in a relaxed and informal setting. We had a great turnout of about 25 people at this event, and made a lot of new connections with members of our local busi-

ness community. We would like to thank everyone who came to support this event at our new location!



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



The APTS Staff accepting our certificate from David Tehan, Chairman of the Board of Directors

turnout of over 50 people at our brand new office, from patients, to family, to business



On Friday, January 16, Active Physical Therapy Solutions hosted our Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, sponsored by the Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce. We had a great



colleagues. We truly appreciate everyone's support in this endeavor and were so glad that so many of you were able to join in our celebration!

APTS Recipe Box: Raw Chocolate Cheesecake

A rich, chocolate cheesecake that's free of dairy and refined sugars and loaded with a full cup of veggies! Tom Zirilli, PT, says you need a really good food processor to make this. It's one of his favorites!

Ingredients:

For the crust:

- 2 cups raw pecans
- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1/4 cup pure maple syrup
- 1/8 tsp fine sea salt

For the filling:

- 2 cups raw cashews (no need to soak)
- 1 cup peeled & diced zucchini

- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp fine sea salt
- 1/4 cup coconut oil, melted

Instructions:

1. Prepare the crust by placing the pecans in a food processor fitted with an S-blade and grind them into fine meal. Add in the rest of the crust ingredients and process again until well combined. Line the bottom of an 8-inch spring form pan with plastic wrap or parchment paper, then press the crust evenly into the bottom of the pan. Place the pan in the freezer to set while you're preparing the filling.

2. In a high-powered blender or food processor, process the raw cashews until they are a fine powder. Add in the zucchini, cocoa powder, maple syrup, vanilla extract, and sea salt, and blend again until a smooth and creamy batter is formed. Add in the melted coconut oil and blend again to fully incorporate the ingredients into a uniform filling.

3. Pour the filling into the frozen pie crust and allow to set for 8 hours (overnight).

4. Serve directly from the freezer for best texture.

This cheesecake will become quite soft if left out at room temperature, so be sure to keep it chilled!

Serves: 12

Source: <http://detoxinista.com/2013/02/raw-chocolate-cheesecake>

Getting Enough Vitamin D in the Winter

Because your body produces vitamin D via your skin after exposure to the sun, your levels can become dangerously low in the winter months. It is very important to ensure that your body has adequate levels of vitamin D, which helps prevent osteoporosis, heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer's Disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, and it may also slow the aging process. The best way to get vitamin D is naturally from the sun. Just 15 minutes of sun at mid-day in the summer is sufficient. However, the winter months make this extremely difficult. Unfortunately there

are only a few vitamin D food sources, as our bodies were really designed to get the vitamin D we need from the sun. Good food sources include fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, & mackerel; mushrooms; eggs; and vitamin D fortified foods, such as milk. As far as vitamin D supplements go, we don't really know if they are actually healthy for us or not. The recommended daily allowance of vitamin D is 600 IU/day. For those who are vitamin D deficient, they may need higher amounts, up to 1,000 IU/day, until their vitamin D levels are in the normal range. It is

important to ensure that we don't get "toxic" on vitamin D, and it's always much better if we can get them naturally rather than in a pill. So the best rule of thumb is (1) get 15 minutes of sun each day in the late spring, summer, and early fall, (2) eat two servings of a fatty fish each week from November to March, and (3) for those that are vegetarian or hate fish, drink 3 cups of a vitamin D fortified milk each day from November to March, as liquid vitamin D is better absorbed than the pill form.



Article by Carolyn Collier, PTA



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Get Well...Get Active...Be Active

**At Active Physical Therapy Solutions,
we utilize the most cutting edge
treatment and management
techniques available. Our goal is to
deliver the best possible healthcare in
a friendly, caring, and well-organized
environment. Our staff is here to
provide active solutions to achieving
your personal goals!**

...Because Life Should Be

ACTIVE!

Ergonomics 101: How to Protect Yourself with Winter Running

As the new year is now in full swing, we hope you are sticking by your new year's resolutions. If you are getting back into exercise again and plan to run outside in Central New York, here are a few helpful tips to keep you comfortable and safe while running in cold weather:

1. Start by dressing in layers. This allows you to adapt to the temperature at different times during your training. As you warm up, you may need to remove layers as your core temperature rises. Layers may need to be added with a change in weather conditions, especially wind and precipitation. Clothes that are closest to the body should be made of synthetic material, preferably with "sweat-wicking" properties. Stay dry, as wet clothing chills the body quickly. If you are sweating excessively, you are increasing heat loss, so remove layers when this happens. Make sure your outermost layer is wind resistant and waterproof.
2. Keep exposed areas covered. This

includes the extremities, head, and face.

A warm hat and gloves are a must in cold weather. You may also want to wear a face mask or scarf to protect your face. A sweat resistant moisturizer and lip balm should be used for added protection. Applying petroleum jelly to areas prone to chapping and chafing may also be helpful. Be aware of the symptoms of frostbite (numbness and pale color to the affected areas of skin) and get out of the cold if you think frostbite is setting in!

3. Consider shortening your stride when running on slick or slippery surfaces. This will allow better control and ability to compensate should you start to slip.
4. Don't forget to stay hydrated! This may be an afterthought in the cold weather but you must remember that you are still losing fluids. Hydration before, during, and after a workout will help avoid dehydration.

Don't let the cold weather be an excuse for not running outdoors. With proper preparation, you can be safe and comfortable. After all, it can be very quiet and calming in the

winter, and the frozen white scenery can be quite breathtaking. If you do not feel safe running outside because of the cold, you may consider running inside on a treadmill. There may be some days where this is the best option for you. Stick with those resolutions and remember to train safely!

Article by Tom Zirilli, PT