

BENTON

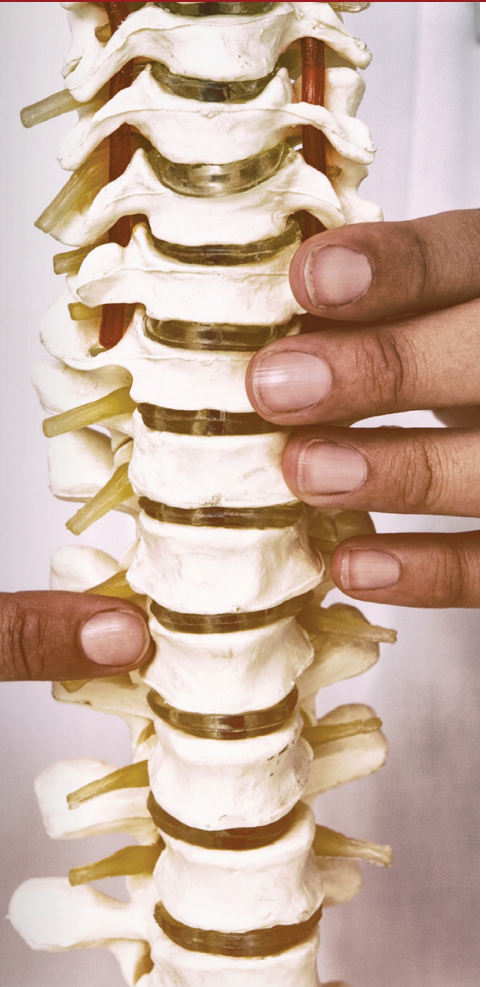
PHYSICAL THERAPY

N E W S L E T T E R

AVOID BACK PAIN BY FIRST IMPROVING YOUR SPINE

Are you living with back pain? You may notice that your pain worsens each morning when you wake up, when you have to stand for more than 10 minutes, or when you have to walk long distances.

(continued inside)



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PHYSICAL THERAPY

N E W S L E T T E R

AVOID BACK PAIN BY FIRST IMPROVING YOUR SPINE

(continued from outside)

The severity of back pain can range from minor dull aches to sharp stabbing pains. Pain that radiates from the spine down to the buttocks and legs is typically a sign of sciatica. However, your back pain can be avoided and resolved by improving your spinal health. **Contact Pro-Active Physical Therapy today to find out how.**

You may be wondering, "What does this mean? How can I tell if my spine is healthy?" When we think of health, we typically focus on nutrition, exercise, and heart health – but spine health is incredibly important, as well. Your spine does a lot for your body – it protects your spinal cord, allows you to breathe properly, and it is what allows your body to move. In fact, almost every function in your body is directly connected to the health of your spine.

This is why spine health is so important. If you are living with back pain, you know how limiting it can be. In order to make sure your spine is at its optimum health, you must achieve the following:

- Good posture and spinal curves.
- Strong abdominal and core muscles.
- Strong spinal and gluteus muscles.

- Good flexibility and balance with side-bending and rotation.
- Good nutrition and rest at night.

How can I improve the health of my spine?

Of course, much like anything else, spine health is easier said than done. Your spine is a complicated structure of vertebrae, discs, joints, ligaments, tendons, muscles, and nerves. Therefore, it takes a delicate balance to make sure it is at its peak level of health and function. Below are 6 ways to make sure you are doing everything you can to improve the health of your spine:

1. Practice proper nutrition.

Nutrition is a critical part of all health, whether you are focusing on your heart, joints, or spine – whatever you do, it is always important to eat right. Healthy fruits and vegetables contain the vitamins and antioxidants that make up a healthy spine function. They help to rebuild the bone, muscle, and connective tissues that are constantly being used throughout the day.

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HOW CAN I IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF MY SPINE?

2. Get some sleep.

Throughout the day, your spine is compressed with standing, sitting, and bending. Did you know that it is actually possible to lose about ½ an inch over the course of a day? Adequate rest in a good position while sleeping helps you maintain a healthy spine. It is ideal to start off lying in bed for the first 10 minutes on your side with your knees curled up, as this allows the discs in your spine to rehydrate. Afterwards, continue sleeping on your side with a pillow between your legs or roll onto your back with a pillow under your knees. Avoid sleeping on your stomach.

3. Give up cigarettes.

Many studies show that nicotine in cigarettes directly accelerates the breakdown of the discs in the spine and destroys connective tissues that keep the joints moving properly. In addition, nicotine increases the inflammatory response in the body, disrupting the body's natural ability to repair itself.

4. Work on the flexibility and strength of your spine.

Your body is meant to move – this is the most important purpose of the spine. You can make sure your spine remains flexible by stretching for 10 minutes every day. It is also important to make time to move around when possible at work. Stretch your spine out by reaching overhead and leaning over to one side, then the other. You can also focus on gently twisting at the waist and stretching your hamstrings. Spend 3-4 days a week working on your core strength with abdominal muscle exercises, so

you can keep your spine and core muscles strong. A strong spine and core allows you to move without stressing the discs or nerves in your back.

5. Maintain proper posture and balance.

If you sit at a desk during the day, make sure you are sitting in a straight-backed chair and your feet flat on the floor. Avoid sitting on very soft couches for prolonged periods of time, as this keeps your spine in a flexed position. When lifting, make sure you keep your spine straight, lift with your legs, and avoid twisting. Proper balance is important for both the small muscles of your spine and your nervous system. You can enhance your balance by standing on one leg at a time for 10 seconds 3-4 times a week.

6. Go to a physical therapist for spine check-ups.

Your physical therapist can check your spine alignment to check for areas that could be improved. It is wise to have your spine checked every 6 months, in order to ensure your back is moving how it should. At Pro-Active Physical Therapy, our physical therapists are experts in the field of spine health who can help your back operate as it should.

If you have been living with back pain, or you'd like to avoid potential back pain, don't hesitate to contact Pro-Active Physical Therapy today. By catching back pain early, we can resolve the issue so it doesn't progress. **Don't live with the limits of back pain – improve your spine health with us today!**

GREEK PASTA SALAD



INGREDIENTS

- 16 ounces short pasta rotini, bow ties, penne
- ¾ long english cucumber diced
- 1 pint grape tomatoes halved
- 1 bell pepper red or orange, diced
- ½ cup sliced pitted olives
- ½ cup feta cheese cubed
- 1 cup red onion diced
- 1 cup greek vinaigrette dressing

INSTRUCTIONS

Whisk together dressing ingredients. Cook pasta al dente according to package directions. Rinse under cold water. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Add dressing and toss. Refrigerate at least 2 hours before serving.

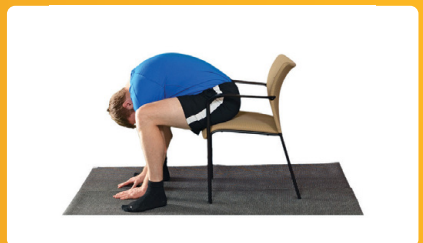
EXERCISE ESSENTIALS

Helps To Relieve Back Pain



REPEAT TRUNK FLEXION | TO FLOOR

Sit down in a chair with good posture. Place your hands on your thighs. Then, let your trunk sag toward the floor using your arms to control the movement. Allow your arms to dangle freely towards the floor. Now use your arms to push yourself back up. Repeat as necessary.



Patient Success Spotlight



“I have enjoyed every visit I’ve had with them. It sure helped my back to be pain free!”

“All of the employees are very friendly and professional. They are knowledgeable about the work they do. I have enjoyed every visit I’ve had with them. It sure helped my back to be pain free!” - **C.W.**

Staff Spotlight



Joe Riggan

*Director of Clinical Support,
Benton Physical Therapy*

Joe is a current resident of Sheridan, AR. He attended college at South Arkansas University. In his spare time he loves hunting and fishing. One day he says he would like to travel to Barcelona, Spain. Joe joined our team in January of 2019 as a therapy technician and has recently transitioned to our Director of Clinical Support. He has a caring personality and patients and staff love working with him. Joe’s favorite verse is “I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me”.

When asked what his favorite part of the job is he says:

“Interacting with the patients everyday and helping them to feel better” - Joe

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FUN & GAMES

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