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STAY IN THE GAME



Newsletter for all our Form & Function Family



OVERVIEW:

Back to School, Back to Comfort: Essential Tips for a Pain-Free School Year

As the school year nears, it's common to concentrate on academic goals and new schedules. Yet, prioritizing your child's physical health is just as crucial, particularly in preventing common issues such as neck and back pain. We understand that physical well-being plays a vital role in supporting your child's overall performance and comfort.

In this blog we'll address the three common questions we receive about preventing back pain, maintaining good posture, and avoiding neck strain; the importance of posture; five essential strategies to help your child stay comfortable and pain-free as they embark on a new school year; and 3 exercises to combat neck and shoulder pain caused by school.

- Back to School, Back to Comfort: Essential Tips for a Pain-Free School Year
- Products We Love
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A newsletter to our entire Form and Function Family to keep you updated on all the happenings in the clinic and to share helpful, entertaining information about your health and wellness. Find helpful tips and tricks on staying active and staying in the game, the game of life that is! We hope you enjoy this month's issue of Stay In The Game.

Common Back to School Questions

1. What Is the Best Type of Backpack for My Child to Prevent Back Pain?

Choose a backpack with padded, adjustable straps and a hip belt to distribute weight evenly and reduce back strain. Ensure it fits your child's torso and encourage them to use both straps and avoid overloading.

2. How Can I Help My Child Maintain Good Posture While Studying?

Adjust the desk and chair so that your child's feet are flat and elbows at a 90-degree angle. The chair should support the spine, and screens or books should be at eye level. Encourage regular breaks and posture exercises like shoulder blade squeezes and chin tucks.

3. What Exercises Can My Child Do to Prevent Neck Strain?

Simple exercises include:

- **Neck Stretches:** Tilt head to each shoulder for 15-20 seconds.
- **Chin Tucks:** Tuck chin to chest and hold for 5 seconds.
- **Shoulder Shrugs:** Lift shoulders towards ears, then relax.

Why Good Posture Matters

Good posture plays a critical role in your child's physical health. Prolonged periods of sitting—common in a school setting—can lead to poor posture, which may result in back pain, neck strain, and reduced energy levels.

Encouraging proper posture helps in:

- **Preventing Musculoskeletal Issues:**

Proper alignment reduces strain on the spine and

muscles, preventing pain and discomfort.

- **Improving Concentration:**

Good posture can enhance your child's ability to focus and engage more effectively in classroom activities.

- **Promoting Healthy Growth:**

Correct posture supports optimal growth and development, essential during the school years.

5 Strategies For a Pain-Free School Year

- **Encourage Physical Activity**

Promote regular exercise like swimming, cycling, or sports to build core strength and improve posture, which helps prevent neck and back pain. Physical activity also reduces stiffness from long periods of sitting.

- **Teach Proper Posture**
Instruct your child to sit up straight with shoulders back

Product We Love



Pillowise

A good night's sleep begins with finding the most well-fitting pillow for your unique body. A Pillowise pillow in your size will perfectly align your cervical spine, which can quickly help to alleviate and even prevent neck pains. Today, over 5,000 Healthcare Professionals around the world are recommending Pillowise to their clients.

To get the best possible rest and for your muscles to be at their most relaxed, it is important to sleep on a pillow that's tailored to your dimensions. An appropriate pillow, one that's the correct height and shape, will adapt to the contours of your neck, is comfortably soft and gives great support.

Sleep is where tissue heals at its fastest rate, so if you are recovering from intense training, or have a physical job, sleep is an essential component of being at your best. Improved sleep can also improve focus and attention for mental work as well, so if you need to be at the top of your mental game to close the deal, crush the presentation to your clients or boss, or smash a new PR in the gym or at a race, improving your sleep could be the difference that makes all the difference.

Find out now by reserving some time to get fitted for a custom pillow that fits your unique shape, and sleep position.

and feet flat. Ensure they use both straps on their backpack and avoid overloading it to prevent back strain.

- Create an Ergonomic Workspace

Set up your child's study area with an ergonomic chair and desk at the correct height. Position the computer or books at eye level to avoid neck strain and support good posture.

- Consider Physical Therapy

For any discomfort or a history of issues, physical therapy can provide tailored exercises to strengthen muscles, improve flexibility, and correct posture, preventing future injuries.

- Ensure Adequate Sleep and Rest

A comfortable sleep environment and consistent sleep schedule are crucial. Proper rest aids in muscle recovery and helps avoid chronic pain

Exercises For Neck and Shoulder Pain From School

- Forward Arm Stretch
Relieve shoulder and neck tension with this stretch:

1. Stand or sit upright.
2. Extend one arm forward.
3. Use the opposite hand to pull the arm across your chest.
4. Hold for 15-20 seconds, then switch sides.

This stretch loosens tight muscles and improves flexibility for better posture.

- Neck Rolls
Increase neck flexibility and relieve stiffness:

1. Sit or stand with a straight back.
2. Tilt your head towards one shoulder, then roll it forward and towards the opposite shoulder.
3. Repeat 3-5 times in each direction.

This helps relieve tension and improve neck range of motion.

- Shoulder Blade Activation

Strengthen upper back muscles to support good posture:

1. Sit or stand straight.
2. Squeeze shoulder blades together, as if holding a pencil between them.
3. Hold for 5-10 seconds, then relax.
4. Repeat 10-15 times.

This exercise enhances posture and reduces neck strain.

So there you have it! By integrating these strategies into your child's daily routine, you can significantly reduce the risk of neck and back pain and ensure a smoother transition into the school year!

If you experience any of these, you should call us at 888-619-2885 to arrange an assessment with our team to fully diagnose your injury, and create a tailored recovery plan to avoid the pain getting worse, and to ensure you get back in the game quickly

You can find out about the cost and availability of a physical therapy assessment by Scheduling Here.

<https://app.pteverywhere.com/formfunctionpt/bookingonline>

Promo of the Month

\$35 PEMF Demo



Health Tip & Trick: Is Sitting Really That Bad For You?

By: Trevor Field

Sitting for long periods in slouched position is the number one cause of back, neck, and shoulder pain for people who visit Form and Function Physical Therapy Clinic. Sitting is a habit that each of us does every single day. We sit on average, for nine hours a day and that's without considering the amount of time we spend lying down. I bet you're sitting down whilst you're reading this right now! And I also bet that you've told yourself that's not me when you read the first sentence of this blog. But... it is. Think about it and break down your day, how active are you really? Almost every activity we do is centered around sitting, whether that's driving, eating, working, watching TV, or even relaxing. Don't worry, I'm guilty of it too. If you've nodded your head and said yes to some of the points above, you could be at risk of running into problems with your health—all because you (and me) sit too much. Has your back, knee, neck, and shoulder pain got worse after spending more time sitting and you're struggling to get back to being active? Here's why. Our new blog post is all about why sitting is so bad for your health, and what you can do to limit your chances of developing health issues by improving your breathing, relaxing your muscles, and more.

Why Is Sitting That Bad?

Have you ever noticed your back and shoulders feeling tight and ach when you've been sitting down for most of the day? Maybe you get that all too familiar feeling of just wanting to have a good stretch and shoulder massage. Well... there's a reason for that.

Sitting makes your shoulders achy and tight because we often sit in a slouched position and roll our shoulders forward. Over time, this can put a strain on your back and neck, causing them to tighten up... which as you know is not a good feeling. I bet if you work in an office, you're probably holding your neck in an unnatural position. I know this because you're holding your neck forward to look at your computer, this is again putting strain on your muscles. Even by just spending an hour sitting, you reduce your body's ability to burn fat up to 90% as it slows your metabolism. This then reduces the amount of good cholesterol in your body, which could eventually lead to problems like heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

How Can I Ease My Shoulder Pain Whilst Sitting?

It's simple... All you want to do is relax your shoulders, then take them up to your ears (almost like you're halfway through shrugging), bring them all the way back so you're pushing your chest out, bring them back down, and then let them relax forward slightly. This is a much better position for your shoulders to be in, especially if you're working in an office and sitting for long periods. Did you know sitting can affect your lungs and other organs? This one might surprise you. When you sit for long periods, you actually reduce the amount of oxygen that enters your body. So, when you're hunched over watching the TV or at your office desk, you're compressing your lungs and limiting the amount of oxygen that fills them. Or have you noticed that you feel bloated after a long day? Well, this could be because your digestion slows down as you're sitting in a curled position. How Can I Help Myself? Great question and it's one that we all need to be asking. The harsh reality is that we all need to sit less and move more.

Sitting down for long periods of time can cause problems, like Sciatica, further down the line, and other issues that get in the way of life.

Stand Up When Talking On The Phone... Or Just In General.

This is a personal favorite of mine; I much prefer being able to walk and talk at the same time. Standing up throughout the day and going for a short walk will help lengthen the muscles and stop them from being all 'scrunched up'. Set A Time On Your Phone. Set a timer for every 30 minutes and stand up and walk! Sitting is something that was once only done only when we needed a rest, and now we spend the majority of our lives either sitting or lying down. Walking for just a minute or two you're allowing more oxygen to enter your body and improve your blood flow. Any extra time spent being active is a bonus.

Stretch! There's a reason a morning stretch feels so good, it's because you're releasing tension from your muscles after staying in the same position. So, continue to do this throughout the day, whether it's on your dinner break or when you get home. As well as this, try being more active on the weekend.

Learn To Improve Your Posture

You don't make a habit out of something without having an initial conscious effort. Apply this to your posture. Every half an hour aim to sit up straight and take a few deep breaths. This will, again, improve the amount of oxygen entering your body and might even make you feel more energized.

So... Is Sitting Really That Bad For You?

As I used to say... is sitting the new smoking? (Yes, I'm being serious) It's just a case of everyone else is doing lots of it, so it must be okay for me to do it too. The excuse that we hear all too often is 'well... everyone did it' and nobody questioned things like smoking until damaging health studies were produced years and years later. All of the things I mentioned above combined are the reasons why you really should not be surprised if your workplace introduces a standing desk area. Once again... I'm being serious. Standing desk areas are there to allow you to carry on with your work but reduce the impact sitting has on your spine significantly.

Recipe We Love *Peanut Butter Protein Bars*



How to Make Peanut Butter Protein Bars

- 1. Mix ingredients.** In a large bowl, mix together the almond flour, protein powder, peanut butter, honey, milk and vanilla using a spatula until all combined. Fold in the chocolate chips.
- 2. Transfer to pan.** Pour batter into an 8×8 baking pan lined with parchment paper and firmly flatten the mixture with a spatula. Feel free to sprinkle in additional chocolate chips, if desired.
- 3. Chill.** Transfer dish to the refrigerator and let the bars chill for 30 minutes to an hour before slicing. You could also stick the pan in the freezer for about 25 minutes until set.
- 4. Cut into bars.** Slice into 16 squares (or you could slice into bigger bars) and store in a the refrigerator in a sealed, airtight container until ready to eat. These bars will last up to 2 weeks.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups almond flour
- 1/2 cup protein powder of choice
- 3/4 cups natural peanut butter
- 1/4 cup honey
- 3 Tbsp unsweetened almond milk, or milk of choice
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup chocolate chips

Nutrition

- Serving: 1 bar
- Calories: 173 cal
- Carbohydrates: 12.3g
- Protein: 8.7g
- Fat: 11.8g
- Saturated Fat: 2g
- Sodium: 58.6mg
- Fiber: 4.3g
- Sugar: 5.2g