

FEBRUARY

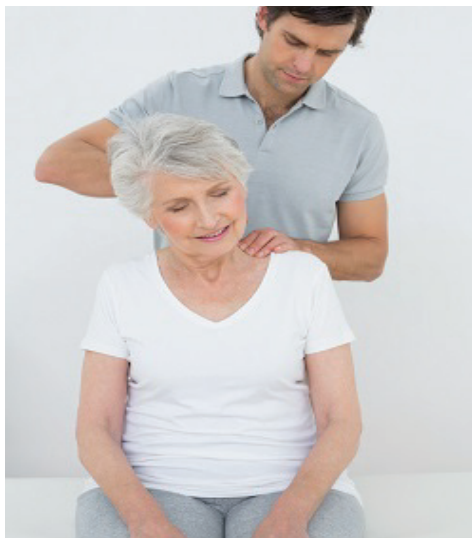
THE THERAPY Connection

A newsletter for our valued patients & friends.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Poor Posture - a major culprit in neck pain.

Poor posture contributes to millions of neck, back and shoulder problems seen by therapists each year. Neck pain from poor posture can be explained as follows: in an upright position, the head is



supported by the spinal vertebrae. Once the head is flexed forward, for instance while using a laptop, the vertebrae do not support the weight of the head as much. Muscles, tendons, and ligaments work harder to hold up the head, which is roughly the weight of a bowling ball¹. Often, just being aware of your posture is enough to help correct or avoid painful ailments like neck, low back, shoulder pain or nerve symptoms in your upper extremities (ex. numbness or tingling).

Top five things you can do to help improve your posture:

- 1. Adjust your lumbar support:** Use lumbar pillows, office chair adjustments or car seat adjustments to provide support on the inward curve of your lower back (small of your back). Adjust to your comfort level. A good lumbar support will force you to sit up correctly.
- 2. Doorway stretches two times per day:** Put your arms on both door frames with your elbows level with your shoulders, lean or step forward feeling a stretch across the top of your chest and front of your shoulders. Hold this position for 30 seconds and repeat three times. This stretches your chest muscles which are often tightened due to rounded shoulder posture.
- 3. Scapular squeezes two times per day:** Sitting up straight, try to pinch your shoulder blades together, hold for ten seconds, repeat five times. This helps work the muscles between the shoulder blades that help to keep your shoulders in a correct position.
- 4. Chin tucks two times per day:** Push your chest forward, keeping your eyes and jaw level, tuck your chin straight back, hold for 5 seconds, then relax. Repeat ten times. Chin tucks improve your posture by keeping the natural curvatures of your spine in their optimal position.
- 5. Be aware of your posture:** Awareness is key. Give yourself a reminder when driving, sitting at the computer or even watching TV. If you are experiencing neck, back or shoulder pain, you should seek the advice of your physician. Physical therapy is an excellent form of posture correction and often provides lasting and long-term improvements.

References: ¹University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign McKinley Health Center: http://www.mckinley.illinois.edu/handouts/neck_pain/neck_pain.htm

Call today to ask us how we can help you get back to enjoying the activities that are important to you!

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“Don’t watch the clock; do what it does. Keep going.”

— Sam Levenson

TELL A FRIEND

The greatest compliment we can receive is for our patients to tell their friends and family about their positive experience with us. If you know someone who is experiencing pain or limitations and you believe they could benefit from therapy, please tell them about us.

We will ensure that they will receive great care and have a positive therapy experience with us!

A RECIPE FOR YOU

Red Beans and Rice

With Mardi Gras fast approaching, we can't help but give you a New Orleans Classic. It's easy to make and will warm you right up!



Ingredients:

- 1lb bag of red/kidney beans
- 1 48 oz container of chicken broth
- 1 cooked sausage link (beef, pork or Andouille) chopped
- 1 white onion - quartered
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- Salt to taste
- About 1 cup of cooked rice per person

Directions:

1. Soak the beans overnight in a bowl of cold water in the fridge (keep it as close to 24 hours as possible)
2. Drain the beans and throw them in a large pot and add all of the chicken broth
3. Add the rest of your ingredients to the pot, stir it in and bring to a boil
4. Once the beans are boiling reduce heat to low and cover
5. The beans will need to cook between 1-2 hours.
6. Check on the beans for softness and stir every 30 minutes. (If the beans didn't spend enough time soaking, they will absorb the chicken broth and you'll need to add more water or broth to the pot.)
7. When you have the right amount of softness in the beans, grab some bowls, add your rice, and pour the beans on top
8. Serve hot and enjoy!