



Back Column

Pinnacle Physical Medicine & Rehab
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The Best of Both Worlds: How Chiropractic and Physical Therapy Work for You

According to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons in Rosemont, Illinois, 80 percent of Americans will experience back pain at some point in their lives. With the exception of pain that is accompanied by high fever, chills or nausea, loss of bladder control, or sharp pain in either of your lower legs, most back pain can be treated by routine chiropractic and physical therapy care such as that offered at our office. Multi-disciplinary practices such as ours that offer a chiropractor, physiatrist, physical therapist and massage therapist are your best bet when dealing with back pain. Chiropractors do more than just spinal manipulation, as reported recently in *Annals of Internal Medicine*. Dr. Showalter will check for a more severe muscle injury (such as strain from overexertion), as well as check for problems with a disk, the spongy water-filled shock absorber between each vertebra.

One of the biggest culprits for back pain is improper approach to exercise. Over time, repeated muscle and ligament problems combined with the stress of activity can begin to damage these natural shock absorbers. Other “back busters” include poor posture, wearing high heels, weight gain, pregnancy, even chronic stress. Another big factor is weak core muscles, which

can't properly support the spine to maintain good posture. When a disk is overstressed, it may gradually bulge from between the vertebrae or it may rupture; both can put pressure on a nerve exiting the spine, which can result in leg and back pain.

In Elena Rover's case, sometimes neglecting to go to the chiropractor can lead to much worse pain in the long run. Elena had her first episode of sciatica while training with a crew team. Her general practitioner prescribed anti-inflammatory meds but, in Elena's words, “he never explained what could be *causing* the pain, so when aches flared again, I popped more ibuprofen and pushed on through. Had I known my problem had a name and that physical therapy could help it, I probably could have prevented the injury that struck before my wedding—and the surgery I eventually had to have.”

Many times back pain can be helped by seeing a physiatrist, an M.D. expert in non-surgical treatment of musculoskeletal problems. Our physiatrist, Dr. Deborah Barton, helps people regain function (rehabilitate) and also works with people with issues such as pain control or regaining strength. If

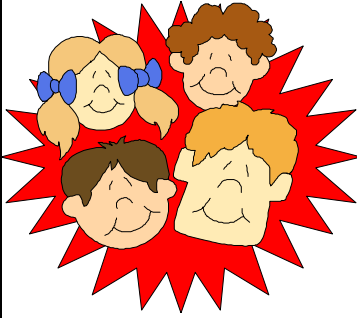
your pain can be helped by physical therapy, Dr. Barton can prescribe a course of treatment specially tailored to your needs to get you feeling better and back in shape. Specific exercises may be all you need to ease your back pain—even if something like a gym workout or sports injury is what caused your problem in the first place. Our physical therapist can help you with a therapy and exercise regimen again that is specifically tailored to meet your needs.

Sometimes, though, major pain and stiffness can make exercise nearly impossible. In that case, the physical therapist will recommend incorporating massage therapy into your treatment plan. Our massage therapist can vary her techniques according to the nature of your pain to help you better recover and enable you to begin the strengthening exercises prescribed by the physical therapist. Throughout your entire course of care, Dr. Showalter, Dr. Barton, and the physical and massage therapists will monitor your progress and will assist you both in managing and eventually overcoming your pain, and will educate you on how to prevent future back injuries as well. A

study in the journal *Medical Clinics of North America* recently revealed that more than 800,000 Americans have back operations every year, but surgery may be necessary in less than 1 percent of back-pain cases. That means that less than 8,000 people actually need back surgery each year...the rest could be helped by using our spinal decompression table for neck and low back disk herniations and receiving physical therapy. When you or a loved one is suffering from back pain, it simply makes sense to take advantage of the services offered here at Pinnacle Physical Medicine and Rehab and avoid costly and often unnecessary back surgery. If you or someone you know is suffering with back pain, call to make an appointment with our friendly team of doctors and professionals today!

Source: *Self* magazine, June 2004





Welcome New Patients

Here are the new patients that became members of our practice recently! We'd like to welcome you publicly and wish you all the best!

Duane Pitts (referred by Savannah Pitts...thanks!)

Dorothy Simmons (referred by Day Karen Cooper...thanks!)

Connie Eden

Emily Dorsey (referred by Lorrie Dorsey...thanks!)

Phyllis Rodgers (referred by Dr. Moody...thanks!)

Brenda Frost
Cindy Nabors

Chelsea Lebsack (referred by Craig Lebsack...thanks!)

Brenda Townsend (referred by Larry Cowan...thanks!)

Seth Gladden (referred by Chris Richards... thanks!)

Jeff Dickerson (referred by Seth Gladden..thanks!)

Sonia Wrate (referred by Dr. Showalter...thanks!)

Thanks to all of our friends who referred patients to us. We want to say "thank you" in a special way. For each person you refer that becomes a patient, we give a "referral reward". Ask Diane how you can receive an extra bonus for sharing the good news about chiropractic.

How to Stop Back Pain Before It Starts

- Build up your core muscles: back, hips, and abs. Yoga, pilates, swimming, and working with a fitness ball are all great ways to do it. Our physical therapist can help design an exercise program that will help build those core muscles and help you strengthen your back to keep you in shape in order to prevent back injuries and pain in the future.
- See the chiropractor and/or physical therapist if you tend to stub one toe or trip over one foot a lot. Even if you don't yet have back pain, it could be a sign of weakness on one side, indicating that a disk could be pressing on a nerve. Remember, nerve damage can be lasting unless you do something about it.
- Avoid cracking your back. If it happens when you stretch, fine, but don't do it intentionally. You could overstretch the spinal ligaments, making the joints unstable, a condition that's difficult to treat.
- Give your desk an ergonomic checkup. Office workers have the potential to cut their back pain nearly in half simply by having ergonomic workstations and training in good habits. Many companies offer ergo assessments, but if yours doesn't, contact Dr. Showalter to discuss setting up an appointment at your company for an ergonomic workstation evaluation.



Tips for Vibrant Health



Good skin care involves more than just using the right soap and moisturizer. Dermatologists say lifestyle habits also play key roles in achieving and maintaining healthy skin. Exercising increases blood circulation, which in turn may enhance your skin's tone and color. A nutritious diet including adequate amounts of protein, fruits, vegetables and whole grains helps the body repair and replace skin cells. Drinking plenty of water helps keep skin hydrated. All these recommendations and more are available through our Optimum Health Clinic. A nutritional blood analysis and other tests can be done for you to show what vitamins, minerals and nutrients you may be deficient in (or have an excess of) as well as help you make lifestyle changes in diet and exercise for a healthier, happier you! Call Dr. Showalter's office today for a consultation to see how we can help **you** reach your optimum health!

Source: www.satevepost.org, Jan/Feb. 2005

Question of the Month:

What percentage of back pain cases are actually severe enough to require back surgery?

- A. 98%
- B. Less than 1%
- C. 43%
- D. 100%

The first patient to call with the correct answer will win a FREE T-shirt. (once per patient, please). The answer to last month's question was: Pinnacle Physical Medicine & Rehab. **Yvette Wheeler** answered the question right.

Our **Patient of the Month** for January is **SOSOSO**. Congratulations! SOSOSO will receive a free 30 minute massage. A random number is picked each month so everyone has a chance to win!!

Five Ways to Fend Off a Cold

1. Drink plenty of fluids.
2. Eat a balanced diet.
3. Wash hands often.
4. Throw tissues away after each use.
5. Stay well rested.

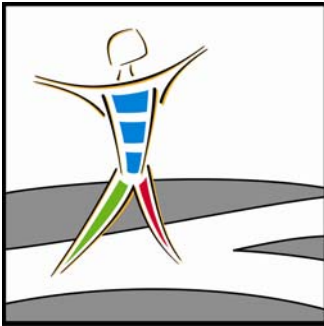
Source: www.womansday.com
11/1/04

Omega 3s Help Fight Cancer

Omega-3 fatty acids, beta carotene, vitamin E and dietary fiber all play a role in the prevention of breast cancer, suggests a pair of studies published in the *International Journal of Nutrition and Cancer*. One study involved 282 postmenopausal Mexican women. After adjusting for family history, caloric intake and other factors, it was found that Omega-3s, vitamin E, beta carotene and high dietary fiber intake all were associated with lowered breast cancer incidence. The other study, involving animals, showed a protective effect of Omega-3 fatty acids, especially DHA (Docosahexaenoic Acid) in rats exposed to carcinogens associated with breast cancer.

Our office carries a product called MLK-1000, a supplement that contains 1,000 mg of Marine Lipid concentrate that provides a dietary source of Omega-3 fatty acids. Each softgel of MLK-1000 also contains 120 mg of DHA and Vitamin E as well. Call us today to see how MLK-1000 can help you add Omega-3 fatty acids to your diet.

Source: *Dynamic Chiropractor*, Nov 3, 2003



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