



**FIND RELIEF FROM PAIN
THIS NEW YEAR**

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HOW POSTURE AFFECTS NECK & BACK PAIN



Remember back when your mother used to tell you that if you wouldn't stop hunching your shoulders, they'd be stuck that way forever? An idle threat, one that barely anyone took seriously. Yet, fast forward a few decades and it turns out that mom might have been on to something, after all.

A poor habit of bad posture can have a lasting impact on your neck and back. The worse your posture is, the more intense your back and neck pain can become. Unfortunately, once you start experiencing neck and back pain, simply squaring your shoulders isn't likely to be much help. Working with a physical therapist can help you to train the muscles in your back, neck and shoulders so that you can improve your posture permanently, and in doing so bring relief to your chronic neck and back pain.

THE POSTURE AND PAIN CONNECTION

Not all back pain is caused by poor posture, and it is true that you can have poor posture for years without feeling the consequences of that slouch right away, but in time the habit is likely to catch up with you. There are certain ways that you can tell if neck or back pain may be a result of poor posture, including:

- The pain in your back is worsened at certain times of day. For example, after you've spent a day at the office, or after a few hours on the couch.

- The pain frequently starts in your neck and moves into your upper and lower back. Pain that seems to travel from one area of the back to another is frequently an indication of posture concerns.

- The pain will subside after switching positions, such as switching from sitting to standing or vice versa.

- Back or neck pain that develops soon after a change in circumstances, such as starting a new job with a new desk chair, or getting a new car.

After years of practicing poor posture, your back, shoulder and neck muscles will likely find standing or sitting with straight posture to be uncomfortable. This is because your muscles have grown accustomed to the slouching, and standing up straight will require some thorough stretching. That doesn't mean that once you have bad posture you can never correct it.

Working with a physical therapist to improve your posture is a great way to overcome chronic neck and back pain. In physical therapy, you will be guided through a series of stretches and strength building exercises that can help you begin training your body to practice better posture, thereby reducing your back and neck pain.

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WHAT CAN I DO?

Of course, there are ways that you can improve your posture at home, as well. Here are several strategies that are typically helpful:

- Try to stand tall whenever you are standing or walking. Hold your head high and square your shoulders, but more importantly work on being the tallest version of yourself. Hunching over is the leading cause of poor posture.
- Use support when you sit to keep your posture correct. Lumbar support in office chairs and car seats will help a bit, but for improved posture you may need to add additional cushioning that will help you keep your back straight.
- Be mindful of how you lift heavy objects. Keep your shoulders square and your chest forward. When lifting something that is over 50 lbs it is important to take extra care. Lead with your hips and try to keep the weight close to your body. Lifting something improperly can lead to injury to your neck or back, which may make proper posture uncomfortable.

WHAT CAN GOOD POSTURE DO FOR YOU?

There are a lot of benefits of having good posture. Aside from saying goodbye to neck or back pain, improving your posture can provide several unexpected benefits to your lifestyle and



personal well-being. Here are a few of the additional benefits of having good posture:

- Proper posture creates quality exercise for your core and back
- Improved respiratory health
- Added protection for your organs, bones, joints and muscles
- Reduced risk of arthritis

If you are experiencing chronic neck and back pain, there is a good chance that it could be related to your posture. Contact your physical therapist to learn more about how you can take steps to start improving your posture today.

EXERCISE ESSENTIALS

Try this movement to stretch your whole back.

SWAN DIVE

Lay on stomach with your arms overhead. Press your chest upwards, keeping the muscles in your trunk and legs relaxed. Repeat 6 times.



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PHYSICAL THERAPY

**YOU CAN BE FREE OF YOUR BACK PAIN!
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Always consult your physical therapist or physician before starting exercises you are unsure of doing.

NEW YEAR MEANS A NEW YOU!

Let Elliott Physical Therapy Help You Reach Your Health & Fitness Goals This Year!

The professionals at Elliott Physical Therapy will help you regain lost motion, strength, balance and coordination resulting from pain in your shoulders, back, neck, hips or knees. Start the year off with a safe and conservative treatment that gets results, we can help to strengthen and increase your mobility, while decreasing pain.

Our goal is to empower you to actively manage your pain, increase your range of motion and get you moving again. We will get you back to living the life you deserve.

CALL TODAY OR VISIT US AT WWW.ELLIOTTPHYSICALTHERAPY.COM



TRY THIS RECIPE! STUFFED MUSHROOMS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 lb baby mushrooms
- 2 Tbsp butter
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 c breadcrumbs
- Kosher salt

- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 c freshly grated Parmesan, plus more for topping
- 4 oz cream cheese, softened
- 2 Tbsp freshly chopped parsley, plus more for garnish
- 1 Tbsp freshly chopped thyme

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 400°. Grease a baking sheet with cooking spray. Remove stems from mushrooms and roughly chop stems. Place mushroom caps on a baking sheet. In a medium skillet over medium heat, melt butter. Add chopped mushrooms stems and cook about 5 minutes until most of the moisture is out. Add garlic and cook until fragrant for 1 minute then add breadcrumbs and let toast slightly for 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Remove from heat and let cool slightly. In a large bowl mix together mushroom stem mixture, Parmesan, cream cheese, parsley, and thyme. Season with salt and pepper. Fill mushroom caps with filling and sprinkle with more Parmesan. Bake until mushrooms are soft and the tops are golden for 20 minutes. Garnish with parsley to serve.

Recipe: delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a20089643/easy-stuffed-mushroom-recipe

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WE CAN HELP YOU:

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- Bend and move freely
- Balance confidently and securely
- Sit for long periods comfortably
- Walk for long distances
- Live an active & healthy life

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