A photograph of a physical therapist in a white shirt and glasses examining a female patient's neck and shoulder. The therapist is wearing a white t-shirt and glasses, and is focused on the patient's neck. The patient is wearing a blue V-neck shirt and has her hair pulled back. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**GETTING TO THE  
CORE  
OF BACK AND  
NECK PAIN**

**SO YOU CAN START ENJOYING LIFE AGAIN**

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# GETTING TO THE CORE OF BACK AND NECK PAIN

## SO YOU CAN START ENJOYING LIFE AGAIN

Back and neck pain are two of the most common issues that American adults experience, putting a huge physical and economic burden on working Americans by being both two of the leading needs for medical intervention and two of the most common causes people have to miss work. While these may feel like two separate issues, it is somewhat common that neck pain and back pain are actually related. Core strength can have a huge impact on your overall health and wellness, and when your core is weak, it could add up to weakness in your neck and back.

### Neck Pain 101

There are a lot of reasons why neck pain may develop, including everything from sudden incidents like a car accident or a slip-and-fall injury, to more chronic issues, such as regularly hunching over a desk at

work or even practicing poor posture. One of the biggest problems with neck pain is that it often triggers headaches, as the pain is so closely connected to the spine and nervous system. What is more, addressing neck pain is sometimes difficult as there is so much potential to cause more damage to the neck. This is why working with a physical therapist to address neck pain is wise. A physical therapist can help treat neck pain by improving range of motion, using targeted massage techniques, and by improving strength as needed. For example, in many situations, neck pain can be treated by improving core strength.

### Back Pain 101

Severe back pain impacts more than half of the population, and many of those with pain in the back as a result of injury end up dealing with that pain long term. One

of the biggest problems with back pain is that once it develops, it is difficult to work around it, and many people begin modifying their movements as a result, causing their back to compensate for the injury by putting pressure on other muscles that eventually just leads to more back pain. For this reason, back pain can frequently become a Catch-22 — avoiding the things that hurt your back could actually lead you to develop more pain in the future. Working with a physical therapist is the best way to cut your back pain issues in half. Physical therapy can address back pain by helping to improve your range of motion, strengthen the muscles in your back and surrounding areas, and by using targeted massage to reduce tension. In many situations, working with a physical therapist to improve core strength can significantly reduce the severity of your back pain.



# CORE STRENGTH AND BACK PAIN

You may be surprised how frequently issues with the neck and back actually stem from issues with core strength. Your core refers to the muscles that make up your torso, including your abdomen. These muscles are called the core because they are at the center of your body, and they are necessary for just about every action that you engage in. Everything from walking and running and swimming to sitting and driving requires you to engage your core.

There are a lot of reasons to improve core strength outside of any existing neck or back pain. When you improve your core, you are likely to also improve your posture and thereby reduce your risk of developing further back pain in the future. Furthermore, the exercise that helps to improve core strength is often helpful in promoting weight loss, and for those who are overweight, this could also help reduce pain in the neck and the back.



Sometimes, when your core is weak, it can cause you to experience added pressure on areas like your neck and back. There are a lot of ways that working with a physical therapist can help you improve your core strength. You may be encouraged to practice core exercises, for example, which may include abdominal crunches or leg lifts. Light weight-training activities are also frequently helpful, as are balance-based activities like yoga.

If you haven't spent much time building core strength in the past, then working with a physical therapist is a great place to start. Your physical therapist will guide you through proper postures and movements to reduce further risk of injury. For more information about how to start improving your core, contact us.

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## EXERCISE ESSENTIALS

Helps loosen your lower back

### PRONE ON ELBOWS

Lie on your stomach, hands beside your shoulders. Push with your arms up on to your elbows. Hold for 10 counts then return to start position. Repeat 8 times.

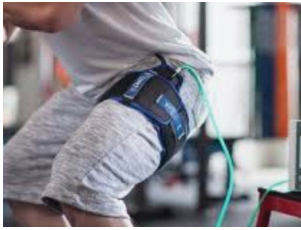


*Always consult your physical therapist or physician before starting exercises you are unsure of doing.*

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PHYSICAL THERAPY

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BRIAN CLANCEY  
PT, DPT, TPI, CSCS



# What is Blood Flow Restriction?

Meet Brian Clancey, PT, DPT, TPI, CSCS from our Easton location! Brian graduated from Northeastern University with a doctorate in physical therapy. He is a former college rugby player and enjoys golfing and staying active in his free time. Brian is a certified strength and conditioning specialist, who loves to use his knowledge to bridge the gap between rehab and performance. Brian has recently become Blood Flow Restriction certified, through Owens Recovery Science. Blood Flow Restriction allows us to mimic the effects of high-intensity exercise, by utilizing lower loads. The device is used during exercise, using compression, to restrict circulation to the working muscle. This can be used to decrease pain, increase muscle mass, or prevent atrophy both pre- and post-surgery. Common injuries that benefit from BFR are post-operative care, tendons, quad/hamstring tears, patellofemoral,

achilles tendon, Rotator cuff, Tennis/golfer's elbow, and ACL/meniscus injuries. However, BFR does not only apply to injury. If you are training, BFR can assist with strength gains, endurance, and recovery needs by using loads that are as low as 20% of your one-rep max.

## Will blood flow restriction benefit me?

At your initial appointment, your physical therapist who specializes in BFR will conduct an evaluation and determine if blood flow restriction will be the best course of treatment for you. And Yes! BFR is safe and completely regulated by the FDA. We use the Delfi unit and its tourniquet device that is listed with the FDA and indicated for the use of BFR. Contact our clinic today and get started on the path toward pain relief and overall functional improvement!



**DON'T DELAY — COME BACK TO PT TODAY**

**FREE TELEHEALTH OR IN-CLINIC CONSULTATION**

Schedule your FREE telehealth or In-clinic consultation with a physical therapist by calling us and mentioning this coupon!

### WE CAN HELP YOU:

- Move without pain
- 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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