



THE SURPRISING CONNECTION

Between Neck
Pain and a Weak
Upper Back

3 EXERCISES
*to Strengthen
Your Shoulders*

IV THERAPY:
Can It Help Your Recovery?

Check out our [newly updated website](#) to learn more about how Elliott PT can provide you with exceptional care!



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- HOW CAN IV THERAPY HELP YOUR RECOVERY?
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- 3 EXERCISES TO STRENGTHEN YOUR SHOULDERS AND UPPER BACK



THE SURPRISING CONNECTION

Between

NECK PAIN

and a **WEAK UPPER BACK**

Plus, a Tale of Two Patients:
One Who Strength-Trained,
and One Who Didn't

Do you ever find yourself trying to rub out a sore spot in your neck or find it difficult to turn your head? Neck pain is a common concern that can range from a mild nuisance to a big problem. And while neck pain can have several different causes, one contributing factor often gets overlooked: weakness in the shoulders or upper back.

When we deal with persistent aches and pains, poor muscle strength often turns out to be a significant underlying factor. When a muscle isn't as strong as it should be, other muscles have to step in to compensate, which puts unnecessary strain on them — and makes them more susceptible to overuse injuries. The result? Seemingly random aches and pains that “come out of nowhere.”

If you're struggling with persistent neck pain, there's a chance that the problem is rooted in your shoulders or upper back. Slouching and prolonged sitting weakens those upper back muscles, forcing your neck muscles to work overtime — and leading to pain.

Let's look at two case studies from the Elliott Physical Therapy files. Both people suffered from neck pain, but only one went through a dedicated strength training program. What happened next?

Ally's Story: No Time for Strength-Training

Ally was a receptionist who spent long days typing on a computer, answering the phone, and doing other clerical work. She started to notice a slight pain in her neck while she was at work. Although she ignored it at first, the pain persisted. She knew she needed to seek help.

Ally made an appointment with us, where we took her through a comprehensive assessment, including several movement and functional screens. We determined that she had strained the soft tissue in her neck due to her sedentary job.

We started Ally's treatment with acute pain management using manual therapy techniques and some gentle mobility stretches, which did help

her immediate symptoms. However, we knew it wouldn't be enough to fully resolve her pain, so we suggested she begin a multi-week therapeutic exercise program to restore strength in her upper back and shoulders, helping to reduce the strain on her neck.

Unfortunately, Ally had decided to go back to school, and between work, her classes, and her family, she simply didn't have time for physical therapy. So, while we were able to help Ally in the short term, her pain persisted in the long term, eventually landing her back in our clinic a year later.

Sarah's Story: A Dedicated Strength Training Program

Sarah's situation was very similar to Ally's. She was a marketing assistant who also spent a great deal of time on both her laptop and a mobile phone, and she also experienced a gradual onset of neck pain. And, like Ally, she paid us a visit when it became too much.

We gave her a similar diagnosis: a strained neck muscle brought on by improper posture and

prolonged sitting. We also provided her with acute pain relief. The difference? Sarah was able to continue her treatment with a six-week therapeutic exercise program.

We met with Sarah twice weekly to guide her through a custom set of targeted neck, shoulder, and upper back exercises. We started with gentle stretches and mobility work before progressing to resistance training exercises. With the help of some dumbbells and an exercise band, Sarah built strength through her upper body, providing her neck with the support it needed.

We also helped Sarah set up her workstation to be more ergonomic, including adjusting the height of her computer monitor and rearranging her keyboard. And we gave her some tips for maintaining postural awareness throughout the day.

The result? After six weeks, Sarah's neck pain was entirely resolved – and she didn't have to seek additional treatment!

Ready To Attack Your Neck Pain at the Source?

If you're struggling with persistent neck pain, physical therapy at Elliott Physical Therapy can help you find lasting relief. Just as we did with Ally and Sarah, we'll assess your symptoms and develop a customized treatment plan that seeks to resolve your neck pain altogether.

Call us today to get started!

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6723111/>; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6093121/>

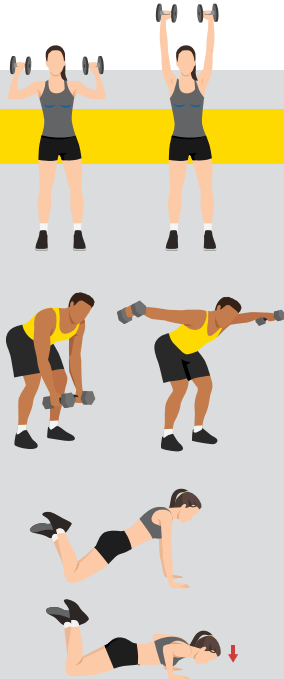
3 EXERCISES TO STRENGTHEN YOUR SHOULDERS AND UPPER BACK

Maintaining strength throughout your shoulders and upper back is crucial to avoid neck pain! The physical therapists at Elliott Physical Therapy can help you develop a customized exercise program that addresses your needs and fits with your abilities.

Curious about what exercises we might include in that program? Here's an overview of three common resistance training exercises we often use to help people with neck discomfort. Before trying any of them yourself, make an appointment with our team to ensure you're using the right weight and proper form.

- 1. Shoulder Press:** With a dumbbell in each hand, make a "field goal" shape with your arms: your arms are bent at a 90-degree angle with your palms facing up. Brace your core as you press the weights overhead, then slowly lower them back down to your starting position.
- 2. Reverse Flies:** Lean forward at your waist with your elbows slightly bent and dumbbell in each hand. Slowly raise the weights until they are in line with your shoulders.
- 3. Modified Push-Ups:** Push-ups are a great way to build upper back and shoulder strength, but if you find the standard push-up too difficult, never fear: the modified version is just as effective. Start on your hands and knees (instead of your feet) with the body in a straight line from head to knee. Slowly lower your chest until it's a few inches off the floor, then rise back up.

A dedicated strength-training program is a great way to reduce neck discomfort. Schedule an appointment with us to get started with one of your own!



Welcoming Our New Neighbor In Hanover: **PRIME IV**



How Can IV Therapy Help Your Recovery?

Recovery is a TEAM sport! *(Shout it louder for the people in the back!)*

At Prime IV, we have a goal to help as many people as possible by educating and administering cutting-edge therapies in our state-of-the-art, spa like environment. We know your goals are likely rehabilitation, recovery, and restrengthening, and we want you to know we are here to help you reach your goals faster and more effectively than you ever thought possible. 92% of the US population is vitamin deficient, and we have the solution. We offer IV and intramuscular vitamins to help you absorb nearly 100% of what we are giving you and put your recovery into overdrive.

Some of the most important ingredients for anyone rehabbing an injury or musculoskeletal issue include (but aren't limited to) amino acids, magnesium, vitamin D, b12, calcium, zinc, and vit c. All of these (and others) can target the musculoskeletal system directly and decrease inflammation, increase lean muscle mass, increase overall recovery times, and decrease the "bad things" things like lactic acid in the muscles. They can also all increase blood flow to the bones and muscles and subsequently help to strengthen and repair them. Recovery is often overlooked but it's critical to remind ourselves it is a multifactorial process. We're confident we can offer a wonderful adjunctive therapy for anyone trying to better their health in any manner.

Adding routine vitamin infusions/injections can greatly impact the speed and quality of a recovery, and we highly encourage coming in to speak with one of our registered nurses for a free consultation on how we can most effectively help you exceed your goals.

Call Prime IV in Hanover to make an appointment:
(339) 345-3941. They are located right around the
corner from Elliott PT in Merchant's Row.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Isobel MacCrate, PT, DPT

Isobel MacCrate, PT, DPT graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Public Health from the College of Charleston in South Carolina. In 2021, she returned to her home state of Massachusetts to pursue a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree with a focus on orthopedics from Boston University.

Isobel pursued a career in physical therapy because it allows her to combine her fascination with the human body and her love of working with and helping people. She loves working in outpatient orthopedics due to the variety of diagnoses and ages she gets to treat. Her clinical interests include lower extremity injuries and post-operative diagnoses. She takes a whole-body psychosocial approach to treatment, ensuring that she can create patient-specific goals so that patients can return to what they love!

When she is not working, Isobel loves traveling, spending time at the beaches around Boston, or trying out local breweries or restaurants. She enjoys activity of all kinds including running, lifting, yoga, and embraces every opportunity to move her body that she can!

WE'RE HIRING!

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with us this spring?

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Dorchester, Easton, Hanover, Hingham,
Milton and North Attleboro.



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