



HEALTH & WELLNESS

THE NEWSLETTER ABOUT YOUR HEALTH
& CARING FOR YOUR BODY



DOES STRESS CAUSE NECK PAIN?

Does stress cause neck pain? The short answer is no! At ELEVATE Physical Therapy, we like to say "contributes to" instead of "cause." The casual way healthcare professionals throw around terms can lead to confusion and, worse still, ineffective treatment. Fortunately, our highly skilled therapists know how to dig deep and find the root cause of your neck pain, and this information helps you find relief!

Let's discuss Nicole, a 40-something-year-old working mother of three. Nicole was used to being very active, balancing her work schedule with getting her kids to all the various activities and school functions that come with being a mom nowadays.

Her neck pain first started as a crick in the neck when she woke up one morning. As the day progressed from driving her kids around to sitting at her desk, she noticed turning her head became more difficult and painful, making focusing on work nearly impossible. Nicole struggled to figure out why her neck started hurting

and came to the conclusion that stress "must be" the culprit. The more pain and difficulty moving she had, the more convinced she was that stress was to blame.

Understanding Nicole's Neck Pain

One of the most common things we hear from our patients is that their pain started for "no apparent reason." Like Nicole, people will wake up with a crick in their neck or notice a stiffness turning when driving in the car. It is also common for people to notice tightness in their upper back and neck after a long day.

So, what is actually the source of the pain? In most cases, there is an issue with the neck joints or the neck muscles due to prolonged positions. Our neck joints don't like remaining in any position for extended periods. In Nicole's case, she first noticed her pain in the morning, which may have been related to her neck position while sleeping. It is also important to note that in Nicole's case, the first sign of any issue was in the morning when she woke up, unrelated to stress.

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UNDERSTANDING NICOLE'S NECK PAIN

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As Nicole's day progressed, her pain got worse. But this also was more likely related to how she held her neck while driving or sitting at her computer. In both cases, her posture, specifically how she held her neck, seems to have contributed to her pain. Prolonged sitting can lead to a forward head position, resulting in tension to soft tissue (i.e., muscles, tendons, and ligaments) or negative changes to our blood flow.

The muscles of our neck function best when we move them. So, holding her head in one position likely led to irritation of the muscles and affected her ability to move her neck, which in turn caused stress.

Stress "contributes" to neck pain because, when we experience stress, our bodies naturally respond by tensing up as a protective measure. This tension can lead to discomfort, particularly in the neck and upper back region. Research studies have found that individuals with higher stress levels reported increased neck pain as compared to those with lower stress levels. This is why we say "contributes" to, but not the cause of, neck pain.

How Physical Therapy Can Help Alleviate Neck Pain

We will target the source of your pain by performing a thorough examination, starting with your medical history and details about how, when, and where your symptoms

began. As we saw with Nicole, determining how, when, and why the pain started helps us eliminate possibilities and get to the actual root cause(s).

Our therapists will also analyze your posture and movement to identify any limitations or restrictions contributing to your condition. We'll use this information to design a program that addresses your specific needs.

Our treatment plans focus on relieving your pain and improving your posture, mobility, strength, etc., and educating you about managing your symptoms. Your program will likely include manual therapy (i.e., soft tissue work and/or joint mobilizations), targeted stretches, exercises, activity modification, or posture recommendations.

We'll listen to your unique situation and specific issues and then work to help you find relief and get back to your normal routine.

Book Your Appointment Today!

If you're dealing with neck pain or looking for someone to help you figure out what is causing your issues, call us today and set up a consultation!

Sources: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1836955320301417?via%3Dihub> • <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36180150/> • <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2270377/> • <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28972599/>

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OUR PATIENTS GET RESULTS



“This is one of the best physical therapy facilities in the county. They truly care about their clients and work very closely with them to help them achieve their goals. If you ever need a caring and supportive physical therapist, they have the best!”
— S.P.

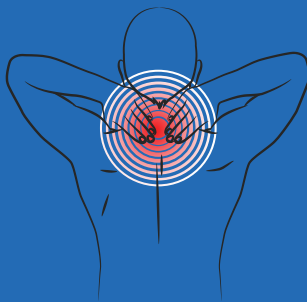


OUR SERVICES GET YOU BACK INTO LIFE!

Our gentle, evidence-based treatments are used to relieve your pain, help you regain function, and aid in your post-surgical recovery.

What can we help you with?

- Joint Pain
- Neck & Back Pain
- Injury
- Arthritis
- Weakness
- Vertigo
- Dizziness
- Sciatica
- Falls
- Poor Balance
- Pre-Surgical & Post-Surgical Care



HEALTHY RECIPE

Grilled Salmon & Vegetables



Ingredients:

- 1 medium zucchini, halved lengthwise
- 2 red, orange and/or yellow bell peppers, trimmed, halved and seeded
- 1 medium red onion, cut into 1-inch wedges
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 ¼ pounds salmon fillet, cut into 4 portions
- ¼ cup thinly sliced fresh basil
- 1 lemon, cut into 4 wedges

Directions: Preheat grill to medium-high. Brush zucchini, peppers and onion with oil and sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon salt. Sprinkle salmon with pepper and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt. Place the vegetables and the salmon pieces, skin-side down, on the grill. Cook the vegetables, turning once or twice, until just tender and grill marks appear, 4 to 6 minutes per side. Cook the salmon, without turning, until it flakes when tested with a fork, 8 to 10 minutes. When cool enough to handle, roughly chop the vegetables and toss together in a large bowl. Remove the skin from the salmon fillets (if desired) and serve alongside the vegetables. Garnish each serving with 1 tablespoon basil and serve with a lemon wedge.

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