

# ASK YOUR DOCTOR IF **PHYSICAL THERAPY IS RIGHT FOR YOU**

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**FYZICAL**<sup>®</sup>  
Therapy & Balance Centers

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

# NEWSLETTER

February, 2021

## WHAT MANY MEDICAL ADS SHOULD BE SAYING...



**Whether you have been injured or have been suffering for a long time, seeing a physical therapist at FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers can help you return to a more active and pain-free life. Give us a call at the location nearest to you!**

You have been referred to a physical therapist. Now what?

If you are one of the millions of Americans every year that suffers from the aftermath of an accident or is trying to “come back” after surgery, you likely expected this referral. If you are one of the millions of Americans who suffer from chronic or recurrent pain, including migraines, you might be wondering what the connection is between physical therapy and long-term pain relief. Fortunately, we’re here to help.

**What is physical therapy?** Physical therapists are part health care professionals and part teachers. Highly trained in human anatomy and physiology, physical therapists use a variety of techniques to diagnose movement and function problems, prescribe therapy and teach a person how to continue improving and avoid injury long after they leave the office. Physical therapy is often prescribed after an injury or surgery, but it can also be an important part of the treatment plan for neurologic disorders, disabilities, cardiac conditions, pulmonary problems, and developmental disorders.

**Diagnosis and Therapeutic Exercise.** Physical therapists are adept at diagnosing the root problem of a person’s functional problem. Rather than looking at the symptoms (pain, discomfort, stiffness), these professionals look at what is causing the symptoms. As a result, physical therapists

perform the type, frequency and duration of therapy based on goals beyond the superficial symptom. For instance, someone who comes to a physical therapist with pain in their knee may begin therapy with goals to strengthen the muscles in their leg, reduce their weight, and improve their posture.

Exercises that are targeted at improving mobility, function or strength in a particular part of the body are called therapeutic exercises. This key component to rehabilitation is the crux to any physical therapy program. In fact, the American Physical Therapy Association has said that physical therapy is not physical therapy without some form of therapeutic exercise. The goal of any exercise of this type is to restore movement, improve strength and function, and promote overall wellness. Specific exercises may be prescribed to restore strength, endurance or range of motion. Additionally, therapeutic exercise may address balance, pain, or proprioception (the sense of how much effort is being used in movement). While many physicians believe in the power of exercise to restore function, physical therapy adds a level of supervision that makes therapeutic exercise more effective.

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# PHYSICAL THERAPY MODALITIES

While therapeutic exercise is the crux of physical therapy, it is by no means the only technique. Physical therapy modalities, or complementary therapies, are used to relieve pain, improve movement and aid in the healing process.

**Ultrasound Therapy.** While many people are familiar with the diagnostic capability of ultrasound, few have had experience with therapeutic ultrasound. Two types are primarily used in physical therapy - continuous ultrasound and pulsed ultrasound. Continuous, or thermal ultrasound heats the tissue it targets while pulsed, or nonthermal ultrasound, has been shown to accelerate healing on a cellular level. Beyond whether the sonic waves are continuous or pulsed, an ultrasound's intensity, wave length and frequency can be adjusted to treat soft tissue injuries, bone fractures, ulcers, incisions, or tendon injuries.

**Electrical Stimulation.** Also known as E-Stim, electrical stimulation is commonly used in physical therapy for pain relief and wound healing. Electrodes are placed on the body and an electrical current is run between them, forcing the muscle below to contract. This contraction can have one or more effects. It can strengthen a muscle that has atrophied, stop a muscle spasm, promote healing, reduce swelling, or enhance the effectiveness of medications. Electrical Stimulation has also been shown to aid in wound healing, depending on where the electrodes are placed and how they are spaced.

**Low-Level Laser Therapy.** Low-Level Laser Therapy (LLLT) uses a low-intensity light to trigger changes within the cells below. Rather than using heat to create a thermal reaction the way some ultrasound therapy does, LLLT uses light to create a photochemical reaction, much like photosynthesis in plants. LLLT is approved by the US Food and Drug Administration to treat hand and wrist pain that is



common in carpal tunnel syndrome, and to treat pain in the muscles and joints associated with arthritis, muscle strains and sprains. Since LLLT uses light instead of heat, it carries virtually no side effects and can be used in combination with other modalities for pain relief.

It is important to remember that no two people's physical therapy experiences will be the same since no two people's goals, commitment, pain and fitness levels, and needs are the same. Your physical therapist will create customized goals, therapeutic exercises and series of modalities that will address your individual needs. **For more information on what physical therapy is or to find out what physical therapy can do for you, contact us for a consultation and to discuss your needs.**

Sources: <http://www.apta.org/AboutPTs/>  
<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18198783>  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4743666/>

**Call us at a location nearest to you to schedule an appointment!**



## SLOW-COOKER CHICKEN & WHITE BEAN STEW

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. dried cannellini beans, soaked overnight and drained (see Tip)
- 6 c. unsalted chicken broth
- 1 c. chopped yellow onion
- 1 c. sliced carrots
- 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 2 bone-in chicken breasts (1 pound each)
- 1 (4 oz) Parmesan cheese rind plus 2/3 cup grated Parmesan, divided
- 4 c. chopped kale
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. ground pepper
- 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ c. flat-leaf parsley leaves

### DIRECTIONS

Combine beans, broth, onion, carrots, rosemary and Parmesan rind in a 6-quart slow cooker. Top with chicken. Cover and cook on low until the beans and vegetables are tender, 7 to 8 hours. Transfer the chicken to a clean cutting board; let stand until cool enough to handle, about 10 minutes. Shred the chicken, discarding bones. Return the chicken to the slow cooker and stir in kale. Cover and cook on high until the kale is tender, 20 to 30 minutes. Stir in lemon juice, salt and pepper; discard the Parmesan rind. Serve the stew drizzled with oil and sprinkled with Parmesan and parsley

## PATIENT SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT



“Before I attended PT at FYZICAL, I had terrible knee and back pain. Tightness took away from my overall explosiveness as a football player. After coming to physical therapy, my knee pain was GONE, and I had more overall mobility in my body. Which I think helped me reach peak performance as an athlete.” - **Xavier S.**

## Exercise To Do At Home

### Loosens Back

#### PRONE ON ELBOWS

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

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## STAFF SPOTLIGHT



### We have a NEW therapist!

**Meet Marco Suriano, PT, DPT, CSCS.** Marco grew up in El Paso, Texas, and Houston, Texas. He attended The University of Texas at El Paso, where he obtained his bachelor's degree in Kinesiology and Doctoral degree in Physical Therapy. He has also been an NSCA Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist since 2015, where he focused on a range of clientele from middle school aged athletes to geriatric populations. Marco's interests include learning about business, insurance policies, investments, and spending time with his kids and wife Cassandra. His hobbies include hiking, running, exercising, and playing with his 2 dogs; Jack the Basset Hound and Toby the Beagle. Marco enjoys learning more about physical therapy in the areas of Orthopedic Rehabilitation, Athletic Performance, Manual Therapy, Biomechanics, Neurorehab, and Pain Neuroscience Education.

## Share the Love!

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# LOVE YOURSELF, LOVE YOUR LIFE



## Happy February, everyone!

This month is all about showing appreciation and love for the ones who matter most in your life. Whether it's through flowers, chocolate, or cards, there's probably someone out there you'd like to go the extra mile for to show them just how loved they are.

Luis Zuniga  
PT, DPT, CHT, MTC

Have you ever considered that maybe this year, the person you go above and beyond for, should be yourself? You've heard the age-old phrase, "You can't love anyone until you love yourself thoroughly." Everyone reacts differently to this quote, however, one thing is certain: until you love yourself, and take care of your health, there's no way you can properly love or appreciate the life you lead.

Oftentimes, it is a patient's love and appreciation for themselves and their wellbeing that ends up being the deciding factor in whether or not a condition will take over their lives. This month, I'd like to share a story with you that highlights this exact situation.

On this occasion a patient came in complaining of significant back pain due to an accident at work. She was a very active, middle-aged person; she loved hiking, biking, you name it, so for her to not be able to do these things was a big deal.

We took care of her back pain, and eventually, her workers compensation ran out. She went back to work, pain-free, and we discharged her accordingly. However, about 6 months later, she gave us another call. "I'm still not feeling that well" was what she told me.

She was having problems doing the things she loved doing outside of her job, and she wanted to come back in for treatment. Her life was still very altered.

This time around, we did more of a medically based fitness program for her. It was easy because she was extremely motivated: she wanted to go back to doing things SHE wanted to do, not just go back to work. She continued with this therapy program for the better part of 5 or 6 months, and she was doing well! The program was very successful, and she was very happy.

Then, all of a sudden...her back pain returned. No injury really it just came back.

Fortunately, we were still seeing her. We evaluated her back and treated her for that pain for a few visits, but something was different. Her pain was not responding in the typical way to the care plan I was using. We didn't see any red flags though, since this would have immediately generated a referral for more testing, she just didn't follow a predicted pathway.

At that point, I decided the best option would be for her to go see her doctor to run some tests and get some imaging. It was then that we discovered she had cancer. We caught it very early.



Had she not made the decision to take control of her health and fitness in order to be able to do the things she loved, we may never have caught the cancer in time for proper treatment to take place.

If we had not been conscious and aware of what was happening with her health and her back pain, things could have gone in an entirely different direction. Imagine if she had just decided to take over the counter medication for her pain instead of being persistent with her therapy. Who knows when (or if) her underlying condition would have been addressed?

It's important to pay attention to your health, to advocate for yourself when you've hit a physical limit you're not used to hitting and want help for it. You're the only one in the driver's seat when it comes to your wellbeing, so why not take control?

Love yourself. Take care of yourself. Listen to your body. Whether it's scheduling your annual doctor's checkup or contacting FYZICAL El Paso because of a nagging ache or pain you just can't seem to kick, do your part.

You want to love your life? Then you must take the first step onto the road to recovery. That first step may lie in getting your balance or gait checked by a therapist at FYZICAL. It might be finally admitting that you no longer look forward to your weekend activities anymore because of a chronic pain condition. Whatever it is, do yourself a favor this year and love yourself enough to advocate for your health!

Our physical therapists are skilled movement specialists who can pinpoint the cause of your pain and get you back to feeling 100%. Contact one of our clinics today to schedule an appointment and get back to appreciating your life for the great wonder that it is.

Best!

- Luis, FYZICAL El Paso

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# FEBRUARY IS HEART HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



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## Celebrate heart health by practicing these simple health tips.

**1. Aim for lucky number seven.** Young and middle-age adults who sleep 7 hours a night have less calcium in their arteries (an early sign of heart disease) than those who sleep 5 hours or less or those who sleep 9 hours or more.

**2. Keep the pressure off.** Get your blood pressure checked every 3-5 years if you're 18-39. If you're 40 or older, or if you have high blood pressure, check it every year.

**3. Move more.** To keep it simple, you can aim for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week of moderate exercise. Even if you exercise for 30 minutes a day, being sedentary for the other 23 1/2 hours is really bad for your heart.

**4. Slash saturated fats.** To help your heart's arteries, cut down on saturated fats, which are mainly found in meat and full-fat dairy products. Choose leaner cuts and reduced-fat options.

**5. Find out if you have diabetes.** Millions of people don't know that they have this condition. That's risky because over time,

high blood sugar damages arteries and makes heart disease more likely.

**6. Think beyond the scale.** Ask your doctor if your weight is OK. If you have some pounds to lose, you'll probably want to change your eating habits and be more active.

**7. Ditch the cigarettes, real and electronic.** Smoking and secondhand smoke are bad for your heart. If you smoke, quit, and don't spend time around others who smoke as well.

E-cigarettes are popular, but they're not completely problem-free. They don't contain the harmful chemicals in cigarette smoke but, they still do contain nicotine, so your goal should be to quit completely, not just switch to a less toxic version.

**8. Clean up.** Your heart works best when it runs on clean fuel. That means lots of whole, plant-based foods (like fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds) and fewer refined or processed foods (like white bread, pasta, crackers, and cookies).