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PHYSICAL THERAPY
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MOVEMENT FOR LIFE® NEWSLETTER

ARE YOU ON TARGET FOR 2011?

by Ashley Fittz, MS, CSCS
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It's still early in 2011, and I'm already seeing people slip back into their old habits, the habits they swore to change this year. Albert Einstein once said, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." Does this quote apply to you? Are you on target to achieve your goals this year?

What is it that separates you from your goals? Or from being your best?

If you want to be a successful business owner or a world class golfer - what is it that is keeping you from accomplishing that?

Most people prefer to stay the same, yet complain about where they are, and how hard it is, and how it's "different" for them. If that's you, then stop whining and take action today.

Is it education?

If so, what books do you need to read? What DVD's do you need to watch? Who do you need to talk to or consult with? What audio CD's do you need to listen to? What

ASK THE EXPERTS: CAN PHYSICAL THERAPY HELP MY BACK PAIN?

Dear Expert,

Recently I have noticed that my back begins to hurt when I am standing in the kitchen making dinner but goes away promptly when I sit down. I have also started to feel pain in both my legs when I am walking. Is there a possibility that these two pains are related? Can physical therapy help get rid of the pain?

Sincerely,

Achey Breaky Back



Thomas J. O'Donnell
PT, DPT, OCS

Dear Achey Breaky Back,

I am sorry for your recent episodes of back pain. Back pain is the most common diagnosis that we treat in our clinic and likely the most common reason people seek physical therapy. Lifetime prevalence of back pain is between 60-90%. The natural history for recovery from low back pain is very good, with improvements at 6-12 weeks after onset.

However, in your case, it is a possibility that your back pain and leg pain is related to a condition known as spinal stenosis. Spinal stenosis is a degenerative condition characterized by narrowing of the spinal canal placing pressure on the spinal cord and nerves. This pressure can cause pain to be felt in the back and often in both legs during periods of long standing and walking, especially downhill. To make an accurate diagnosis of



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falls
prevention
program will
show improvements in
numerous fitness indicators
such as strength, flexibility, balance
and cardiovascular endurance

To better understand how to reduce fall risk, it is important to have a clear grasp of who is most likely to fall within a given population. Such individuals generally exhibit more than one single characteristic that renders them vulnerable to falling. Education as to prevention and rehabilitation programs (*physical therapy*) can thus be designed and implemented for targeted groups.

WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO FALL?

Individuals likely to fall can be placed into three groups: Those likely to fall, those even more likely to fall, and those extremely likely to fall.

Individuals likely to suffer a fall present as follows:

- Prior history of falls (*big surprise!*)
- Female gender (*due primarily to a lack of lower extremity strength and gait patterns*)
- Live alone (*likely due to external hazards and necessary activities of daily living*)
- Take 4 or more medications daily (*due to the intended and non-intended singular and combined effects of certain drugs and the general health of those prescribed such medication*)

The incidence of falling increases as the number of the above risk factors increase.

Individuals even more likely to fall present as follow:

- Inability to arise from a chair and sit back down five consecutive times without using the hands to assist in the efforts (lack of hip and thigh muscle strength)
- Inability to maintain a single leg balance for 5 seconds on each leg (the non-weight bearing leg must not touch the weight bearing leg when single leg standing)
- Inability to walk 10 meters in under 25 seconds

Along with the aging process comes a decrease in balance and strength along with other indicators. A properly designed physical therapy program can significantly improve both of these fitness indicators in individuals at any age. Walking speed in itself is a significant factor in far more than just balance. Indeed, walking speed may be as important a health indicator as are vital signs such as blood pressure and heart rate.

PERFECT STORM: IS MOM LIKELY TO SUFFER A FALL?

by James E. Glinn Sr, PT
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Falls and those injuries caused by such an event have serious ramifications for the person falling, their family, and the nation as a whole. This is particularly true in the case of the elderly who tend to fall to a much greater degree than any other age group (except perhaps toddlers who are injured much less frequently!). Here are a few statistics related to falls in the elderly:

- Women are 67% more likely than men to suffer a non fatal fall
- Women are two times more likely to suffer a fracture-related fall
- Men are 49% more likely to die from a fall than are women
- Falls are the leading cause of injury deaths in older adults
- Nearly one-half million older adults are hospitalized annually due to falls
- The combined direct medical cost for non-fatal fall injuries in the U.S. is approximately \$19 billion annually.

From the above, three things should be considered:

1. Falls can have serious consequences for those who fall, their families, and as a whole are very costly in terms of medical expenses and long-term care
2. A significant number of falls could be prevented through simple interventions that are much less costly than the medical expenses and long-term care incurred by injuries from falling
3. By taking an active role in preventing a fall, those engaging in a

ARE YOU ON TARGET FOR 2011?

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

seminars do you need to attend? What mentorships are you going to?

Is it experience? If so, who can you study under to get that experience?

What about a personal goal of fat loss or muscle gain? What if you want to lose 20 lbs? What foods would you have to eat on a daily basis? What training would you have to do? How much cardiovascular work? How many sets, reps, exercises in your weight training program? Should you even have a weight training program?

Who is the best trainer in your area that you can hire? What sort of time commitment is needed?

Is that time commitment realistic for you?

Are you just lacking the information?

Are you lacking a plan?

Or do you know what to do and just aren't doing it?

Are you supposed to take a 6 am spinning class and sleep in instead?

Are you just not taking action?

I bet most of you have never asked yourself these questions and taken the time to really answer them. Most people prefer to stay the same, yet complain about where they are, and how hard it is, and how it's "different" for them. If that's you, then stop whining and take action today.

As we push forward through 2011, are you where you wanted to be last year when you set your goals?

If it's a lack of information, then get that information and then take action. If it's a lack of action, then get off your butt and do something.

If you can answer these questions, then make a list and start moving towards your goals.



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**Keep in touch with our team,
we want to hear from you!**

ASK THE EXPERTS: CAN PHYSICAL THERAPY HELP MY BACK PAIN?

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

stenosis would require a thorough physical evaluation and likely obtaining an X-Ray or MRI.

Physical therapy can be very effective in the treatment of spinal stenosis and most other causes of low back pain. As movement experts we will be able to identify specific causes of your back pain. We can then put together an exercise prescription specifically designed to address your needs. Together we can help you reduce your pain and get you back to making yummy meals and on the road with your walking program.

Yours in good health,

Thomas O'Donnell, PT, DPT, OCS

ABOUT OUR EXPERT

Tom has experience treating elite college and high school athletes of all types with special focus on golfers, baseball players and soccer players. Tom has done study in the biomechanics of the golf swing and pitching and has received Level 1 Medical Certification from the Titleist Performance Institute. He has developed many post-operative rehabilitation protocols with the orthopedic surgeons he works with, and has created functional sport tests for the shoulder, hip and knee to determine readiness for return to athletic participation. Tom has a passion for teaching and has given lectures on the Therapeutic Management of the Post-operative Hip.

In 2008, Tom was recognized by the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties as a Certified Specialist in Orthopedic Physical Therapy (OCS). Tom is also a Certified Clinical Instructor from the American Physical Therapy Association and serves as a clinical instructor to students from Pacific University, Eastern Washington University, the University of Washington and Creighton University.

In his free time, Tom enjoys playing golf, hiking, and is an avid fan of music from many different genres. Tom and his wife Kristen have recently re-located to Tucson. Together they look forward to exploring all that the Southwest has to offer.

SECRETS TO SUCCESS (AT ANYTHING)

by Ashley Fittz, MS, CSCS
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I think we've all been guilty of setting a lofty goal, only to be derailed by what life throws at us. Sometimes having visitors from out of town, parties, and travel can really throw a monkey wrench into our plans. So how do we stay on target to reach our goals?

Secret #1: Develop strategies to handle disruptions to your routine. The first step is recognizing that there is something that isn't optimal for you. Step two is to develop strategies to improve that situation or issue.

Over the years, I've gotten better at developing on-the-road workouts, eating strategies, and rituals that allow me to stay on target when faced with many of life's obstacles. My strategies aren't "rocket science", just planning ahead and a little preparation which goes a long way.

Secret #2: Strategy trumps willpower. Studies show that willpower is actually in limited supply. Meaning, resist the donut now and it may be really hard to resist it later. Therefore, I believe it's more important to focus on good strategies rather than willpower alone. For example, if you eat ice cream every night, rather than trying to "be good" and resist it, simply remove it from the house. If you consistently visit the vending machine because you don't have time to go to lunch, your strategy would be to pack your lunch the night before and bring it with you.

What is keeping you from staying on target to achieve your goals? Start recognizing these limitations and develop strategies to allow you to succeed.

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