



“THE MESSAGE”

Health & Fitness Newsletter

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WHAT’S NEW WITH FIT FOR YOU?

➤ As you know whenever I find valuable information or a fantastic referral I share it with everyone. I had the opportunity to sit down and personally speak with Dr. John Stratis and his staff at Aesthetic & Reconstructive Surgery.

Why am I speaking with Dr. Stratis – well the truth is I have been looking for a reputable and qualified surgeon – not for me but for those clients that I have and will work with in the future who have lost a significant amount of excess weight. What to do with all of the loose hanging skin is no longer an issue that I can only shrug my shoulders about. Instead I can recommend Dr. Stratis and with a great deal of confidence. In fact I’ve asked him to write an article for an upcoming issue of this newsletter.

His article will be interesting, as he will explain what all he does, types of surgeries and more. So keep an eye for an article from Dr. Stratis himself.

**Aesthetic & Reconstructive Surgery 717-728-1700 *
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➤ **Specialty Services** – I have dedicated a great deal of time, study and effort towards working with those who suffer from neuromuscular conditions such as Parkinson’s disease.

Specialty programs that specifically address the issues associated with such conditions have proven to be successful in many ways so far. Continued research and effort will make this specialty service as provided by Fit For You unique with it’s in-home training like approach as it is blended with the concept of overall wellness.

For more information about Fit For You contact:

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LEARN THE LOW-DOWN ON LOWER BACK PAIN SYNDROME

By Joe Green

Your back, you don't see it much but everyone else does and it's a sensitive area to us. The low back in particular is located at the very core of the body, at the center of our existence. So many of us simply stress the back out by performing rigorous activities, using poor mechanics when in motion and by allowing our physique to fall out of shape.

Some **Risk Factors** you should be aware of that contribute to the onset or continuation of back pain are:

- Aging, as we get older our chance for back pain certainly increases, in fact women are at greater risk after the age of 60 due to osteoporosis. (Both men and women are at equal risk up to the age of 60).
- Smoking increases the chances of low back pain.
- Emotional stress and physical strenuous physical labor both increase the chances of low back pain.
- Extended periods of travel such as driving, flying etc.

Now that we understand some of the risk factors for back pain let's talk about some of **The Causes**.

Low back pain and lower extremity pain are often lumped into one category, but the causes, and therefore the treatments, can be quite different. Lower extremity pain, when it radiates from the low back, is usually the result of pressure on a nerve. The pain is often in the distribution, which the nerve supplies.

Low back pain, on the other hand, is often related to the mechanics of the spine. Muscle strain from lifting, arthritis, and trauma such as a fall or car accident, osteoporosis, and fracture are often causes. Often, disease processes which cause lower extremity pain can also cause low back pain, and vice versa.

Psychological and emotional factors can play a role as well. When you've had a bad day, your back might hurt, but later that day, while having fun with friends, you may completely forget about the pain. Low back pain can also involve several causes.

The following is a list of some of the general categories into which low back and lower extremity pain are often classified.

- **Sprained/strained ligaments, tendons, and muscles.**
Ligaments connect bone to bone and tendons connect muscle to bone. All of these can become bruised as a result of sports injuries or heavy lifting. Although these injuries are usually self-limited, and heal with time, repeated trauma can cause chronic pain.
- **Degenerative Disc Disease**
We hear this one a lot. Something none of us can avoid is this condition in fact after we turn 20, each of us suffers a slow degeneration of the discs of the spine. Normally, the disk is a shock absorber situated between two vertebral bodies. It consists of a soft jelly in the center, called the nucleus pulposus. A firm band called the annulus fibrosis holds this together. When the disc dries up, it shrinks, and can result in mechanical pain. In addition, as the disc height collapses, the exiting nerves can become compressed, leading to lower extremity pain. Generally, this condition poses no danger, but can be very annoying as you can imagine.
- **Herniated Discs**
Herniated discs are referred to and named in different ways such as slipped, bulging, ruptured, and retropulsed. But regardless of what we call it, let's evaluate the concept of a herniated disc. When the jelly like nucleus pulposus ruptures through the annulus fibrosis, the "herniated" portion can press on a nerve, causing pain and weakness. The nerve can get "pinched" resulting in sciatica, a radiating pain to the lower extremity. Over 90% of herniated discs occur in the lowest two levels of the lumbar spine, between L4/L5 and L5/S1.
- **Spinal Stenosis**
This condition refers to "pinching" of the nerves within the spinal canal. The spinal cord generally ends at the L1/L2 level, which is located at the top of the lumbar spine. The spinal nerves then pass lower, within the spinal canal. These nerves supply the movement and sensation in the lower extremities, as well as providing function of bowel, bladder and sexual activities. When these nerves are pinched in the central canal, pain is caused, radiating down to the lower extremities. The pain is

generally worse when standing or walking, and is improved by sitting. When standing, the thickened ligament can "buckle," causing pressure on the nerves, but when bending over or sitting, the ligament is stretched, resulting in decompression of the nerves.

- **Emotional Stress**

Emotional stress can have a significant impact on low back pain. In fact this may be one of the most common causes. Experiencing back pain, changes in sleep, loss of appetite, and fatigue are common results of emotional stress. When under substantial stress, changes in posture often occur shifting your center of gravity, making the back more prone to injury. In addition, when under emotional stress or when depressed, people tend to take poor care of themselves resulting in poor overall physical conditioning and weaker muscles.

- **Osteoporosis**

Approximately 28 million people in the United States are affected, and women are significantly affected. Osteoporotic fractures are suffered by 50 percent of women and 13 percent of men. When bone is weak, it doesn't take much to cause it to fracture so picking up a heavy object the wrong way could cause a fracture to a weak bone.

- **Arthritis (Osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid arthritis)**

This degeneration of joints can occur throughout the body, and the spine is no exception. To some degree, a certain degree of arthritis is just part of the normal aging process. Degeneration of the joints, with associated narrowing of the openings through which the nerves travel is common. Bone spurs are seen frequently as well. Rheumatoid arthritis can be severe but usually doesn't affect the lower spine as much, although those affected can often have problems located at the top of the cervical spine, in the neck.

- **Abnormalities (Deformities)**

These fall under several categories, depending upon which way the spine is curved. Kyphosis is when the spine is curved forward, in a flexed position. Lordosis is present when the spine is bent backward, as if one is leaning back. Scoliosis is present if the spine is curved from side to side. More than one of these curves can be present in one person. The spine is specifically designed to support our bodies, while maintaining the center of

gravity out over our feet. By disturbing this finely placed center of gravity, as in a curved spine, there are undue stresses, torques and tensions placed upon the remainder of the spine, resulting in pain, and accelerated degeneration.

- **Lordosis**

This swayback stance often can result from postural corrections to counterbalance weight difficulties and it can lead to low back pain.

- **Scoliosis**

This type of curvature of the spine seems to have a predilection for teenage girls, around the time of puberty. While often halted by braces or exercises, if it becomes severe, it can change the chest cavity shape, affecting heart and lung function.

- **Residual Pain**

Kidney infections, ulcers and gallstones can cause pain in the low back as well.

Exercise and nutrition can certainly help with back pain. Weakened lower back muscles are far more prone to injury. A program involving core training should be designed to help strengthen back muscles and abdominal muscles as well. It is important to realize that you cannot have strong well-developed back muscles without having your abdominal muscles in the same condition.

Special considerations should be followed when exercising. It is important to avoid high-impact exercises such as running if you have lower back problems. Next, be certain to have a fitness professional supervising your workouts to help reduce the chances of injury and lastly exercise modalities involving strength, flexibility and coordination should all be successfully incorporated.

There are several exercises that would be of great benefit, for a list of those exercises feel free to contact me.

Nutrition is helpful because issues of excess weight wreak havoc on the lower back in particular. This unnecessary stress winds up affecting the hips and knees and possibly even the feet. Safely reducing one's weight will help to improve posture and relieve pressure from joints, tendons and ligaments.

Take care of your back, it's the one thing that's "behind you" all the way and at all times!

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Pasta With Smoked Salmon And Basil

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 small garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh basil
1 tablespoon finely chopped scallion
2 ounces smoked salmon, minced (about 3 tablespoons)
½ pound fresh egg noodles, linguine, or fettuccine
salt & freshly ground black pepper to taste

Put a large pot of salted water on to boil for the noodles. Put the oil, garlic, parsley, basil, scallion, and salmon in a warmed bowl large enough to hold the pasta. Toss the mixture well.

When the water boils, add the noodles and cook al dente; this should take about 3 minutes, since fresh noodles cook very quickly. Drain the noodles, add to the bowl, and toss with the flavorings. Add salt if desired and freshly ground pepper to taste. Divide the pasta between two warm plates and serve at once.

Don't worry about eating raw garlic; it is minced, and the heat of the pasta will wilt it considerably as it's tossed. Go ahead and sauté the garlic first if you prefer.

Servings 4 – Calories: 429, Total Fat 11g (1g sat, 1g polyunsat), Protein: 20g, Carbohydrates: 64g, Cholesterol: 140mg, Sodium 255mg.

PEP TALK

*We become what we think about
- Earl Nightingale*

NUTRITION TIPS AND SEVEN PARTY RECIPES

By Joe Green

- Spicy Cocktail Meatballs with Chili Sauce
- So-Lo Chili Surprise
- Tex-Mex Quiches
- Tuna Mix Samplers
- Rosemary Garlic Chicken-Wrapped Asparagus Lollipops
- Pesto Stuffed Mushrooms
- Cilantro Scallops with Creamy Cilantro-Lime Dip

Nutrition Tip #1

Drink at least 8 cups of water per day because your body needs water to process fiber.

Nutrition Tip #2

Fruits and veggies that are tolerated best by anyone with an irritable bowel include well-cooked asparagus, beets, carrots, mushrooms, potatoes, spinach, sweet potatoes, and zucchini. Fruits include applesauce, soft bananas, grapefruits and grapefruit juice, kiwifruit, peaches and pears.

Nutrition Tip #3

Both soluble and insoluble fibers benefit our bodies. Depending on your symptoms choose the fiber source that would benefit you best. Soluble fiber sources such as oatmeal, rice, barley, ripe fruit, or psyllium may provide relief from diarrhea. Insoluble fiber sources such as wheat bran, most legumes and veggies may be most helpful if you're constipated.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AT MY FIRST MASSAGE APPOINTMENT?

By Rebecca Earley

It is best to arrive about 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment. When you arrive, you will be asked to fill out some paperwork about your medical history. The therapist will usually ask such questions such as, “Are you under a doctor’s care presently?” and “Are you taking any medication. If so, why?” These questions are not meant to be intrusive but are necessary for your therapist to determine what type(if any) of massage is appropriate for you. For example, people taking aspirin or blood thinners tend to bruise easily – this must be considered when determining how much pressure to apply.

After you complete your paperwork, your therapist will discuss the information you have given him/her. Your therapist will probably ask for more detail regarding any health conditions you may have. Additionally, he/she may ask what you expect out of the session. Are you seeking relaxation, relief of muscular pain, or enhancement of athletic performance?

After the information gathering is complete, your therapist will take you into a treatment room. Usually, the rooms are designed for comfort and relaxation. Lighting will be low, and you will probably be treated to some soft, relaxation music. Your therapist may have a candle burning. If the aroma from a candle bothers you, or if you feel the temperature of the room is not comfortable, let your therapist know. The session is about YOU!!!

Your therapist should explain the draping procedure for the clinic (what clothes to remove and how to cover yourself with sheets/towels). Some people are a little apprehensive about this part, but a professional therapist will assure you that you will be covered with the drapes **at all times**. Remember, you can undress to **your** comfort level, and your therapist will work around any clothing that you wish to keep on. At this time, your therapist will leave the room to let you get on the table and covered.

When the therapist returns, the massage will start. You can chat with your therapist if you wish, or you can remain completely silent and just enjoy. Your therapist will probably ask you how the pressure of the massage is – **BE HONEST!** If you want more or less pressure, say so. If there are areas that you do not want touched, say so. Communicating honestly with your therapist will ensure a more effective session for you.

After the massage is over, your therapist will leave the room to let you get dressed. You may be a bit groggy, so allow yourself to wake up before you jump off of the table! After you get dressed and return to the waiting/reception area, your therapist should give you some water to drink. He/she should explain the importance of drinking plenty of water after a session. Now go home and relax!

COMING UP IN NEXT MONTH’S ISSUE...

- **“Take It To Heart” Heart Disease The #1 Killer of American Women - By Joe Green**
- **“How To Tell If Your Weight Is Harming Your Heart” - By Joe Green**
- **Angel Connections: A Woman’s Program Of Supportive Services - By Gigi Jantos**

ALL ABOUT REIKI (Pronounced ray key) Energy Medicine for Changing Times

By Gigi Jantos

These are times of great change. Dramatic shifts in medicine and healing are happening all around us now. Our society has shown respect for complementary, integrative and energetic therapies by its growing interest in learning more about them, and choosing to engage in these methods for healing diseases. According to the *New England Journal of Medicine*, in 1990 one-third of the population in this country consulted complementary health-care providers, spending \$14 billion for care.

Looking at our lives these days, it would seem unwise not to acknowledge that we are residing in an age when the energetics not just of the body, but of all of life are reshaping our world. The computer age represents our coming to rely upon energetic information. We are moving at a pace that is racing to keep up with the speed of thought – and thought drives the human body. As an energetic therapy, Reiki recognizes the power of our thoughts and beliefs, and can help to take us to a place of mental empowerment.

Reiki, a Japanese word translated as Universal Life Force, is challenging to discuss because we don't have a frame of reference for this in our Western culture. It is a method for connecting this universal energy with the body's innate powers of healing. Reiki's history is found in the ancient records of many Eastern cultures. It is a method of therapeutic touch that assists in the restoration of balance on the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual levels.

The biological intelligence that marshals the body's resources to heal are amplified by Reiki. Studies have shown that Reiki creates the relaxation response, which may lower blood pressure and heart rate, thereby relieving tension and anxiety. This state of relaxation also strengthens the abilities of the immune system to defend against bacteria and viruses. It stimulates the brain's production of endorphins that can act to decrease the perception of pain and help the perception of well-being.

A Reiki session is usually one hour in length. With Reiki, there is no body manipulation; only therapeutic touch used while the client is fully clothed. Reiki is a simple, natural and safe method that can help many different conditions, and works in conjunction with all other medical or therapeutic techniques. Why not try a Reiki session today?

Gigi Jantos has lived in the Harrisburg area for 24 years, and is a Wellness Consultant and Reiki Practitioner and Teacher. You may contact her at 717-763-8338, by email at gjantos@paonline.com, or log onto www.mindbodyspiritwellness.com

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TIP FOR FEBRUARY

When choosing a nonprofit(s) to be the recipient of your generosity, choose those whose mission statement correlates to your personal beliefs. If someone you know has survived cancer or lost the valiant struggle, there are organizations that work for cancer research and cures, many of them disease specific. Or if children are your interest, again, many fine organizations are there for you to donate to. Choose carefully, and ask to receive their newsletters, annual reports and other marketing tools. In receiving this information, you are asking for their accountability of their finances and how they spend YOUR dollars.

Also, if time permits, volunteer at these organizations. Time is just as valuable as money and you may be surprised at the feelings of accomplishment you will have. In giving to the community, you are also giving to yourself.

Jeanne L. Troy, President

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