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PYRAMID CENTER

530 Lakehurst Road, Suite 101
Toms River, NJ 08755

RARITAN BAY MEDICAL PAVILION

2 Hospital Plaza, Suite 310
Old Bridge, NJ 08857

DOCTORS

Jess G. Alcid, M.D.
Karl R. Blum, M.D.
Robert F. Closkey, Jr., M.D.
Sripad H. Dhawlikar, M.D.
Mark T. Kasper, M.D.
Justin P. Kubeck, M.D.
John A. Petrillo, M.D.
Elmo T. Samuel, M.D.
Christopher Passariello, M.D.

PHYSICIANS ASSISTANTS

Melissa A. Marks, PA, ATC
Douglas J. Tiburzi, PA-C
Esther Genack, PA-C



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Welcome

WELCOME TO the third edition of Ocean Orthopedic Journal. We would like to take this opportunity for our patients to get to know us better. Ocean Orthopedic Associates is a collection of talented, highly trained Orthopedic Surgeons and staff dedicated to serving Ocean, Monmouth, and Middlesex counties. Ocean Orthopedic Associates was founded in 1969 by some of the original Orthopedic Surgeons to practice in Ocean County and their commitment to excellence and dedication to orthopedic care continues today.

Our Orthopedic Surgeons are Board-Certified by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons specializing in sports medicine, total joint replacement, spine surgery, pain management and adult reconstructive surgery. Our goal is to provide a comprehensive team approach in order to offer patients a continuum of care from general orthopedics and fracture care to highly specialized spine and joint reconstruction.

Our services include digital x-ray technology, open MRI, physical therapy, canes, crutches, braces and other medical equipment, pain management including radiofrequency ablation, advanced fluoroscopic imaging and ultrasound. Ocean Orthopedic Associates team includes nine orthopedic surgeons, three physician assistants, five physical therapists, an on-staff radiologist, and a highly trained staff of medical assistants, nurses, radiology technicians, surgical technicians, case managers, surgical coordinators, paralegals, certified coders and various administrative personnel. Our nursing staff is outstanding, including certifications in advanced cardiac life support (ACLS) and pediatric advanced life support (PALS). We are proudly Joint Commission Accredited and NJ ambulatory care facility licensed, here for you, focused on providing the very best customer service. I hope you enjoy our Orthopedic Journal. Please share this with friends and family. We thank you for the opportunity to provide comprehensive orthopedic care to our community.

Warmest Regards,

Alex J. Sturzebecher, MBA
Executive Director



In This Issue:

- 5 **Ocean Orthopedic Associates Services**
- 6 **Back in the Driver's Seat**
East Brunswick Truck Driver is Back in Action After XLIF®
Minimally Invasive Back Surgery
- 9 **Healthy Fitness at Any Age**
- 10 **Preventing Neck and Back Pain On the Job**
- 14 **Meet Our Team**
Physicians, PAs, and Physical Therapists

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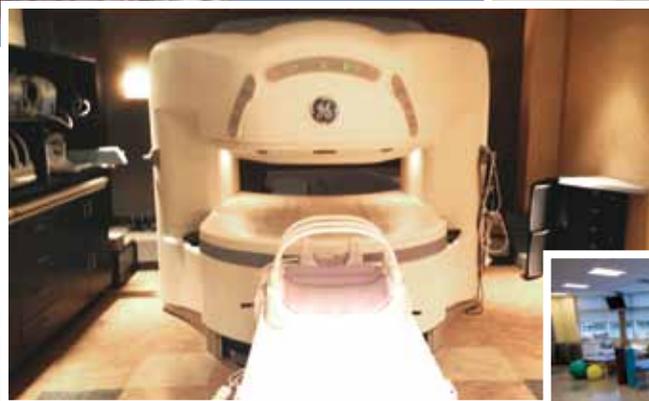
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Back in the

Driver's Seat

East Brunswick Truck Driver is Back in Action After XLIF® Minimally Invasive Back Surgery

By **Dr. Justin Kubeck**

Living with chronic back pain over the last 15 years had put more miles on East Brunswick resident Michael Ryan than his job as a tractor trailer truck driver.

Fortunately, a breakthrough minimally-invasive procedure known as XLIF® (eXtreme Lateral Interbody Fusion) performed by Dr. Justin P. Kubeck, a board certified fellowship trained spine surgeon, helped put Michael back in the driver's seat.

After years of opening and closing heavy metal trailer doors, jumping on and off forklifts and climbing in and out of truck cabs, coupled with a childhood accident, Michael lived with chronic back pain.

It didn't take anything major to put Michael out of work. Even something as simple as a sneeze, picking a sock up from the floor, or stepping the wrong way could leave him in agony for weeks.

A guy who was just naturally always doing something, Michael could no longer take long drives to the shore, go swimming, garden, or enjoy the hobby he really loves: restoring classic VW Beetles.

Michael, a 56-year old smoker, had gained 30 pounds in recent years due to inactivity. He took prescription painkillers daily.

Michael felt his life had become very restricted. "I lived not only with constant pain but also with the fear that I was going to blow my back out," recalls Michael. "Life became a vicious cycle. I couldn't be active so I became a couch potato. When I became a couch potato, I gained weight. Gaining weight didn't help my back get any better."

About eight years ago, Michael had his first MRI, which revealed several herniated discs. Michael didn't do anything further with this diagnosis because, like most people with severe back pain, surgery was an alternative that he was not yet ready to face.

Two years ago, Michael was referred to Dr. Kubeck, who is on the staff of the Neck and Back Center, a component of the Human Motion Institute at Raritan Bay Medical Center.

"Michael presented with a multiyear history of back pain and sciatica," says Dr. Kubeck. "He was often incapacitated by pain, which kept him out of work."

"I lived not only with constant pain but also with the fear that I was going to blow my back out," recalls Michael. "Life became a vicious cycle. I couldn't be active so I became a couch potato. When I became a couch potato, I gained weight. Gaining weight didn't help my back get any better."



Epidural injections administered by Dr. Kubeck helped relieve some of Michael's pain. He was able to return to work and function normally, with some limitations. "The epidurals helped for about a year," recalls Michael.

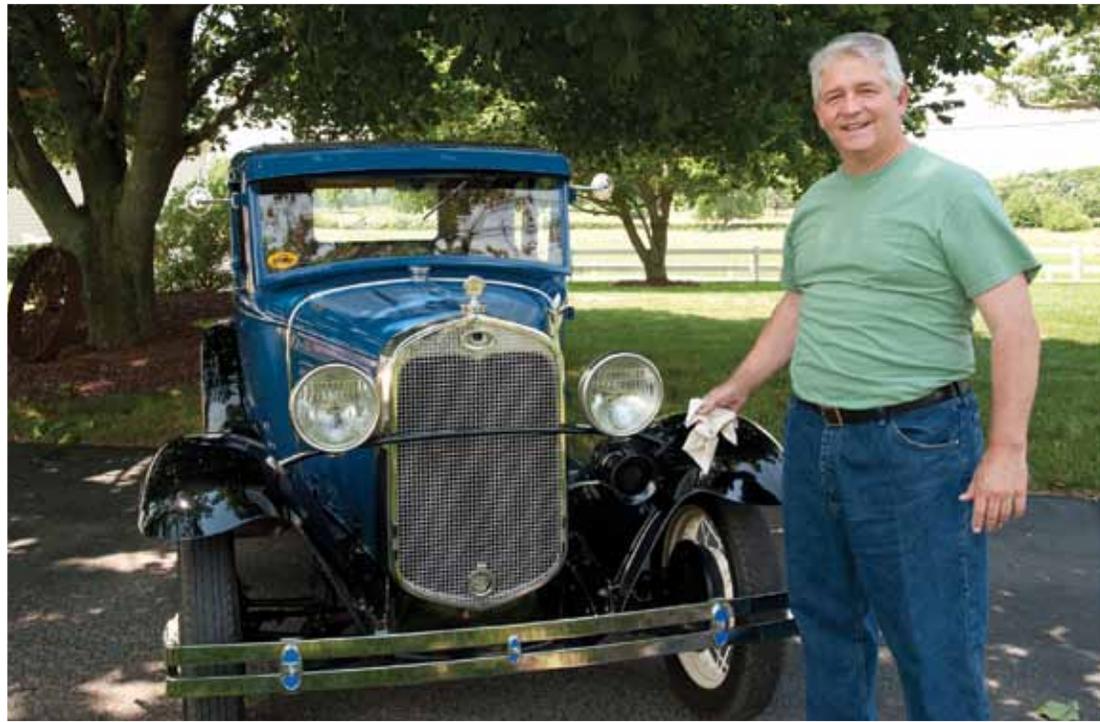
Choosing XLIF® Minimally Invasive Surgery

In January 2015, Michael was working on his daughter's car. "I bent down to pick up a pair of work gloves when the pain shot through me," he says. "I could barely stand up. The pain was crippling."

After additional diagnostic testing and a thorough evaluation, Michael met with Dr. Kubeck for a serious discussion about more advanced options to fix his herniated discs and pinched nerve.

"Michael could continue with pain management, which brought some temporary pain relief, or consider minimally invasive surgery, which offers a more permanent solution with less pain and risk than traditional open back surgery," says Dr. Kubeck.

"The tests showed that the three discs at the base of my spine were so bad, so crushed, that they were leaking fluid," says Michael.



“I needed to get some stability. I was worrying about the future, worrying about being unable to work.”

On May 5, Dr. Kubeck performed two procedures on Michael’s back - XLIF®, eXtreme Lateral Interbody Fusion, and TLIF - or Transforaminal Lumbar Interbody Fusion - both minimally invasive procedures.

Previously, patients who required spinal fusion were faced with complex vascular surgery, large incisions, and a lengthy recovery. The exciting new XLIF procedure involves specialized implants and an advanced side-approach surgical technique which is less traumatic to a patient’s muscle and tissue, involves a smaller incision, and results in a much quicker recovery.

Dr. Kubeck performs XLIF minimally invasive spinal surgery at Raritan Bay Medical Center’s new Medical and Surgical Pavilion at 2 Hospital Plaza in Old Bridge. The Neck and Back Center uses a multifaceted approach to accurately diagnose and treat back and neck pain and is dedicated to returning patients to normal activities quickly and safely with help from a nurse navigator who guides patients and their families through surgical care. Treatment options include physical therapy, medication, alternative therapies and lifestyle changes, non-surgical and minimally invasive surgical procedures.

“I don’t really remember much about the surgery itself,” says Michael, “but the nursing staff took great care of me. Raritan Bay Medical Center in Old Bridge has now become our family’s hospital.”

Michael spent the night at the hospital. In the morning, a physical therapist guided Michael as he got back on his feet. To his amazement,

“I know how much I can do by performing the surgery. It’s a technical skill,” says Dr. Kubeck. “I give Michael all of the credit. He took his health under control and improved his chances for a better outcome.”

within a few hours he was walking up and down stairs. Later that same day, Michael was released to go home.

“With minimally invasive procedures like XLIF, there is no need to go to a rehab facility post-surgery,” says Dr. Kubeck. “Patients essentially have a 23-hour hospital stay.”

Today, Michael Is A Superstar Patient

While it is important to have a specially trained orthopedic spine surgeon experienced with XLIF perform this procedure, Dr. Kubeck believes generally that the biggest determining factor of how someone is going to do post-surgically is what they do before surgery.

“I know how much I can do by performing the surgery. It’s a technical skill,” says Dr. Kubeck. “I give Michael all of the credit. He took his health under control and improved his chances for a better outcome.”

Michael had several weeks to wait for his surgery date. “I quit smoking and dieted,” says Michael. “I got up to walking about a mile a day, and I dropped about 15 pounds before surgery.”

These small steps toward better health made all the difference. “My recovery has gone faster and better because I was able to get in shape beforehand,” says Michael.

After the first week following his surgery, Michael walked around the block for the first time. Soon he had progressed to walking two miles a day. Now that he has healed from his surgery, Michael has begun physical therapy to regain his flexibility and is working out with light weights.

“Dr. Kubeck gave me the confidence to go ahead with this procedure,” says Michael. “There are no guarantees in life. It was a big decision, but I got to the point where I could no longer avoid surgery, and then I wanted the best. Dr. Kubeck is the best, and my experience at Raritan Bay Medical Center was the best.”

“When a patient is proactive with their health, exercising regularly and taking positive steps, it adds up to an optimal outcome,” says Dr. Kubeck. “Thankfully I was able to correct Michael’s problem with a minimally invasive, albeit technically demanding procedure, one I perform regularly at RBMC that greatly improved the quality of his life.”

.....

Dr. Kubeck is affiliated with the **Neck and Back Center at Raritan Bay Medical Center** in Old Bridge. Ocean Orthopedic has a new office location at 2 Hospital Plaza, Suite 310, Old Bridge, NJ 08857



Dr Nima Patel, PT, DPT
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Achieving

Healthy Fitness at Any Age

By Jess G. Alcid, M.D., Sports Medicine



The way you age is determined by more than just your DNA. Whether you're blowing out the candles on your 30th birthday cake or planning a big 5-0 bash, physicians, scientists, nutritionists and fitness pros all agree that exercise is the closest thing we have to a true fountain of youth.

The latest research reveals that exercise can help delay and even reverse aging's debilitating effects. Exercise protects your heart, builds muscle, strengthens bones, fights cancer, boosts your immune system, keeps your brain alert and maintains your weight in a happy place.



In your 20s, you have the ability to execute intense, heavy and frequent exercise. Your 20s represent the best time to build muscle, reach peak bone mass, strength and agility, and establish a lifelong fitness habit. For many men and women in this decade, sports are a part of life. Regular basketball games, biking, aerobics and running help keep 20 year olds in top shape.



In your 30s, you've hit your stride. These are often the best years for professional sports stars, and especially endurance athletes. However, metabolism begins to slow and body fat percentage can begin to creep up. Exercise should focus on developing endurance and coordination as well as increased cardio through sports such as running, tennis and regular workouts.



Your 40s mark the decade when you shift to caring for your body at the gym. Joints need more sustained attention. To stretch peak performance, workouts should emphasize flexibility and strength training. Tennis, golf, hitting the gym and even walking are good sports for people in their 40s.



In your 50s, keep inspired by remembering that regular exercise is also the strongest medicine to promote successful aging. Fitness and mobility are goals for people in their 50s and beyond. Golf, tennis, walking, swimming and gentle aerobic activity can help 50 year olds stay in shape.

As you age, maintain a fitness level that allows you to move around without effort. If you are in your mid-fifties or sixties, it is easier to maintain fitness than to try to get into shape. Fortunately, obtaining a higher fitness level is possible at any age.

For those in shape now, the goal is to maintain. Bravo to all of the 50+ year olds who are already in shape. You are way ahead of the fitness curve, but it is important to train smart as you age in order to decrease the odds of experiencing injuries that could sideline you for weeks or months. The key to longevity is to focus on more flexibility training as well as to add non-impact aerobic activity. Flexibility programs like yoga or a daily stretching plan will help you maintain joint flexibility. Non-impact aerobic activities like swimming, biking, rowing and elliptical gliding are great forms of cardiovascular exercise at any age but especially for older adults. These activities will help to burn calories and fat, build muscle and strengthen bones while protecting the joints from unnecessary pounding.

For those out of shape – it's not too late to start. If you are trying to get started with a fitness program for the first time ever, or if you have taken a few decades off from a fitness routine, there is hope as long as you can fit fitness into your schedule. In only minutes a day, you can go from being sedentary to a higher fitness level.

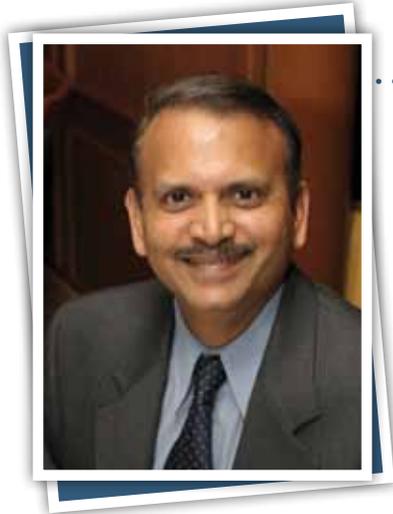
Get started with stretching, gentle exercises such as walking or swimming, and an eating plan to help you lose weight without dieting. But take it easy and don't treat your body like a twenty-something. Take it slowly, and while you may not improve as fast as a younger person, don't get discouraged.

Preventing

Neck and Back Pain

On the Job

By Dr. Sripad H. Dhawlikar



In just about any job situation, there are going to be hazards that can lead to neck and back injuries, whether you are sitting at a desk or working in a warehouse. Once you encounter back or neck pain, you are four times as likely to experience it again. This is why prevention is essential to your long-term recovery.

Sitting at a desk

The word “ergonomics” seems to surface more and more in the workplace. Ergonomics is basically a term for making sure the way in which you perform a task is done in the most safe and efficient way possible. Ergonomics is often applied to those sitting at a desk during the day. While the monotony of sitting at a desk all day seems harmless, sitting for long periods can actually lead to back pain. The back does not do well being in a static position for long periods of time. Sitting also places some load on the back, especially if the chair is poorly designed.

The basic rules of desk-related ergonomics

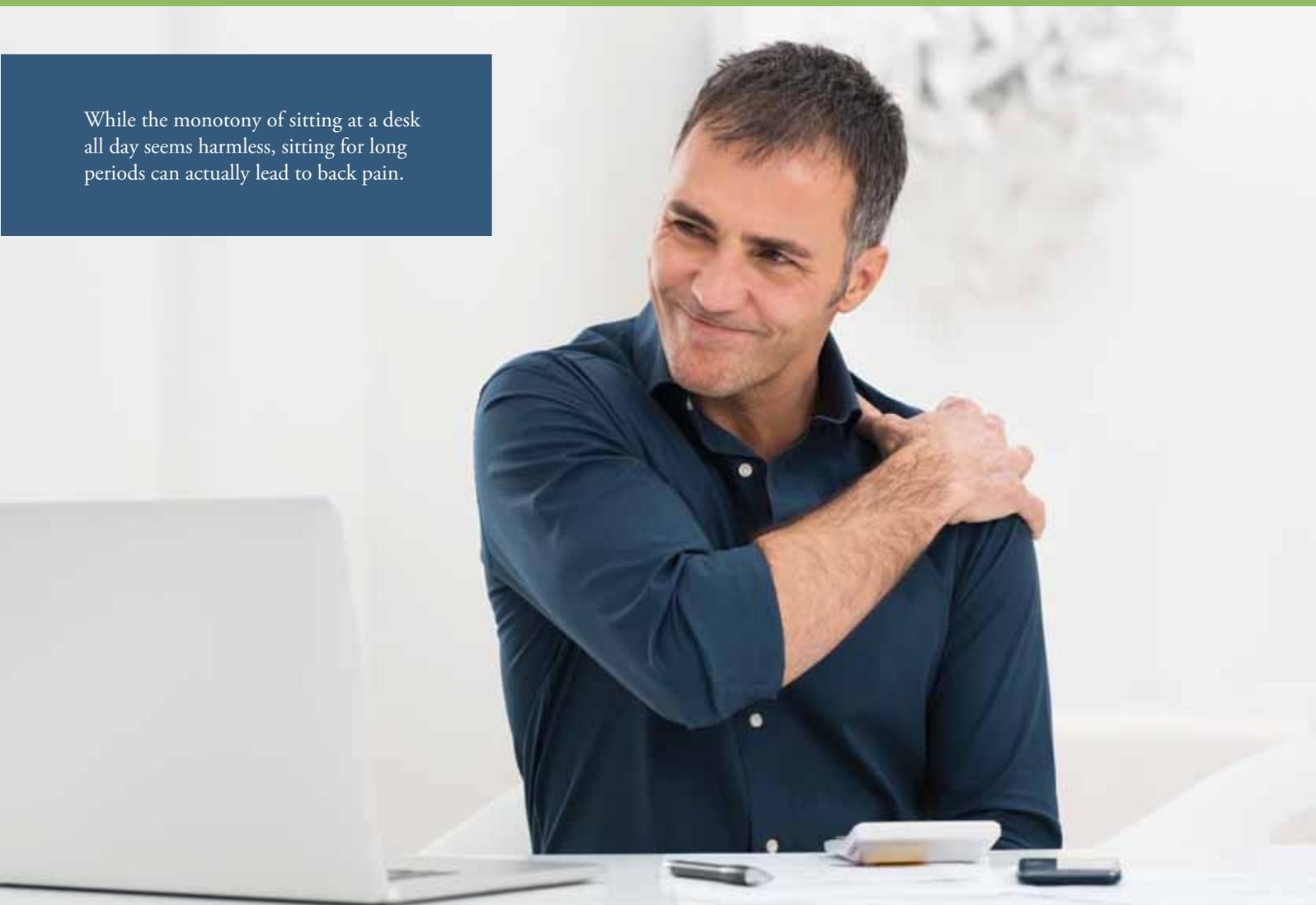
1. Make sure your chair molds properly to your back. Many employers provide chairs that support the lower back. If not, bring a rolled up towel or small pillow to work. Place it behind your lower back to reduce stress on the back.
2. Make sure your feet rest flat on the floor. If this is a problem, use a footstool. Proper foot and leg alignment will ease back stress.
3. At your desk, your forearms and thighs should be parallel while typing for proper shoulder alignment. If you need, use a pad to support your wrists while typing.
4. When you type, your neck should not have to crane constantly as your eyes dart from keyboard to monitor. To avoid this, the monitor should be at eye level or slightly below eye-level.
5. Get up and move around every half hour, even if it is just a quick stretch by the side of your desk.

Standing for long periods

Some workers, like cashiers, cooks and teachers, must stand for several hours without rest. While standing, people rarely equally distribute their weight onto both legs. Rather, they tend to shift weight from one side to



While the monotony of sitting at a desk all day seems harmless, sitting for long periods can actually lead to back pain.



another, throwing the spine out of alignment, which can lead to back strain.

If you find yourself having difficulty standing without shifting weight, try standing with one leg on a footrest, periodically switching feet. Take a minute every now and then to do back stretches, which will help loosen up stiffness.

Driving and back pain

Long drives can cause muscle strain. Sitting pulls the muscles into their shortened position, causing stiffness. Also, the sciatic nerve, which runs between the spine and thighs can be compressed as a result of sitting for long periods of time. Be sure to remove your wallet from your back pocket during a long drive, and use a rolled up towel for lumbar support. Stop and stretch every hour or so to keep muscles loose.

Lifting heavy objects

Accidents are prone to occur during improper lifting. Learn how to lift properly. Bend at the hips – not the lower back. Most people believe bending their knees will ensure a safe lift, but this alone can still lead to a back injury.

The most important tip is to bend the hips and push the chest out, pointing forward. Also, one should never twist. Bending the knees alone will still allow a person to curve the back and risk an injury, but keeping the chest pointing forward will guarantee a straight back.

The further an object is held from one's center of gravity, the more force required to hold that object up. For example, for most people it is not too difficult to hold a gallon of milk close to the chest, but it can be quite difficult to hold a gallon of milk stretched out in front at arm's reach.

Of course, the milk does not get heavier when it is further from the body, but it does require much more force to hold it up. This extra force will also run through the lower back. Therefore, the closer the object is to one's body, the less likely it is to lead to back injury.

Eight out of ten people will suffer from neck or back pain at some point in their life. Whether the pain is something that interrupts your quality of life, or is a recurring condition that leads to lost work days, consult a neck and back pain specialist to get help and find relief.

Tips for

Sports Training

Core Strength is key

- Make sure to incorporate core strengthening exercises into your training.

Stabilization and balance training:

- Incorporate stabilization and balance exercises to ensure proper form and mechanics

Self-myofascial release (foam rolling) is an important tool for:

- Injury prevention
- Increased range of motion
- Flexibility
- Recovery

Nutrition

- Fuel your body properly to take on the caloric demand necessary in your training



Uses and benefits of Kinesiology Taping

Kinesiology Taping (KT tape) is a beneficial tool for helping to temporarily alleviate pain and speed up recovery. It lasts from 3-5 days and can be worn in the shower and swimming pool.

Benefits:

- **Pain relief:** The lifting action of the KT tape helps to relieve pressure on the pain receptors underneath the skin to allow for immediate relief.
- **Swelling reduction:** Lymphatic draining channels are able to drain out any swelling away from the injured area.
- **Reduced muscle fatigue, cramps and DOMS:** repeated muscle contraction from exercises can cause lactic acid, which causes fatigue cramping and delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS). KT tape helps to remove lactic acid and other exercise by-products from the affected area.
- **Assist weak or injured muscles:** KT tape provides physical and neurological support.

First consult with your medical doctor to see if Kinesio Taping is safe for your individual use. Kinesiotaping is prohibited for use from certain injuries or illnesses.



Myofascial Release Using a Tennis Ball

Self myofascial release (SMR) uses your own body weight to release adhesions and help with tightness throughout the body. You may feel slight discomfort in certain trigger point areas. For each exercise, it is important to note that deep, fluent breaths are critical while performing SMR. If there is a spot you are rolling that feels tight or essentially “lights up”, keep the ball in that area for 20-30 seconds with applied pressure to help with the release. Only perform as many repetitions as you feel comfortable, or until a release from the adhesion is felt. This may take numerous attempts.

Feet

In the standing (or sitting) position, place the ball underneath the arch of the foot. Apply pressure and roll the foot over the tennis ball so it targets the arch, the heel and the ball of the foot.

Calves

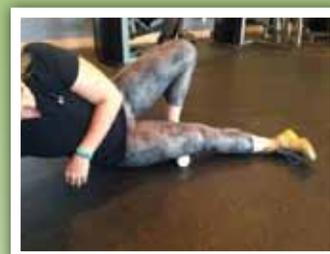
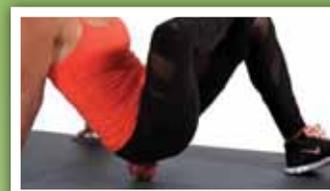
While sitting on the floor extend one leg out and place the ball beneath the calf. Use your arms to prop yourself up off the floor, and slide you leg along the ball. Rotate the foot so the toes point in and then out, so you can target different areas of the calf muscle.

Glutes (buttocks)

While sitting on the floor, place the tennis ball underneath the glutes. Cross one leg over the other to apply added pressure (place the ankle of the opposite leg just above the knee), and lean towards the side that the leg is crossed over. Place your hands on the floor next to you for stability and roll along the ball so that it targets all areas of the glutes.

Illiotalibial band (IT band)

Lay on your side and place the ball underneath the IT band (outer thigh). Use the opposite foot for a stability support and slide you leg along the ball so that it rolls the length of the outer thigh.



Meet Our Team



PHYSICIANS

Jess G. Alcid, M.D.
Sports Medicine

Karl R. Blum, M.D.
Sports Medicine

Robert F. Closkey, Jr., M.D.
Revision Specialist

Sripad H. Dhawlikar, M.D.
Spine Specialist

Mark T. Kasper, M.D.
Joint Replacement

Justin P. Kubeck, M.D.
Spine Specialist

Christopher Passariello, M.D.
Joint Replacement

John A. Petrillo, M.D.
General Orthopedics

Elmo T. Samuel, M.D.
Joint Replacement

PHYSICIANS ASSISTANTS

Melissa A. Marks, PA, ATC

Douglas J. Tiburzi, PA-C

Esther Genack, PA-C

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Lawrence M. Newan, MPT

Krista M. Cino, MPT

Mary Grace Roldan, BSPT

Geraldine Retuya, BSPT

Sheila Faith Pesta, DPT

Elizabeth Egan, PTA

Elaine Maniaci, PTA



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