



NEWSLETTER

YOUR HEALTH IS OUR PRIORITY

EMPOWERALASKA.COM

AUGUST 2024

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FIND RELIEF FROM
YOUR HEADACHES!
DISCOVER HOW PHYSICAL
THERAPY CAN HELP!



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Thank You!



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Did you know...

that physical therapy can be a game-changer for those suffering from cervicogenic headaches? Yes, those nagging headaches that start in your neck and creep up into your head can be eased with the help of our physical therapists!

Cervicogenic headaches come from problems in your neck, and that's where our physical therapist steps in. We'll get to the root cause, whether it's tight muscles, stiff neck joints, or the way you sit or stand.

Once they know the cause, our therapists use hands-on techniques to loosen up those tight spots and get your neck moving better. They might use gentle stretching, massage, or special exercises. It's not just about easing the pain right now; it's about teaching your body to move in ways that keep the pain from coming back.

At Empower Physical Therapy, our physical therapy programs aren't just about fixing injuries; it's about helping your body work its best. For those who didn't know, physical therapists can definitely help with headaches. So, if you're tired of those headaches, give our physical therapists a try. It could be just what you need to feel better and get back to enjoying life headache-free!

Neck Pain to Headache: Uncovering the Causes and Signs of Cervicogenic Headaches

Cervicogenic headaches are common headaches that originate in the neck and are triggered by neck problems. Common culprits include:

- Poor posture
- Neck injuries like whiplash
- Wear and tear in the neck joints due to age

You're at a higher risk if you spend hours hunched over a computer or smartphone. Sports that jolt the neck, like football or even a minor car accident, can set the stage for these headaches.

Unlike migraines that often come with nausea or light sensitivity, cervicogenic headaches usually start with neck pain. This pain then travels up to the back of your head, sometimes reaching the forehead or area around the eyes. It's typically felt on one side and can be triggered by certain neck movements or positions. Stiffness in the neck, pain when pressing on certain spots in the neck or base of the skull, and sometimes a reduced range of motion in the neck are tell-tale signs.

Continued on next page.

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If you're experiencing these symptoms, it's a sign that your neck might be the culprit. Understanding these causes and symptoms is crucial because treating a cervicogenic headache is different from tackling a migraine or tension headache. It's all about getting to the root of the problem — in this case, the neck!

Targeting the Source: How Physical Therapy Tackles Cervicogenic Headaches

Physical therapy at Empower Physical Therapy plays a crucial role in managing cervicogenic headaches. Our approach is particularly effective as it targets the root cause of the pain. Our therapists will start with a comprehensive evaluation, including your medical history, history of headaches, and a thorough physical examination.

Our team will use the most effective treatments to help you resolve your pain and teach you the tools you'll need to prevent future episodes. Our programs typically include:

- **Manual Therapy:** This involves hands-on techniques, where the therapist manipulates and mobilizes the neck and shoulder regions. It reduces stiffness, improves range of motion, and decreases pain in cervicogenic headaches.
- **Dry Needling:** This involves using monofilament needles to address myofascial trigger points in the muscles and stimulates healing at a localized area.
- **Joint Manipulations:** This involves moving the joints of the neck and spine in a quick matter to create the "popping" sound people

are used to hearing. This is focused to increase mobility of the joints of the neck and decrease overall pain.

- **Targeted Stretches:** These are specific stretching exercises focused on the neck and upper back muscles. They aim to relieve tension and improve mobility in these areas, thus helping to reduce the intensity and frequency of headaches originating from the neck.
- **Strengthening Exercises:** These exercises focus on building the strength of the neck, shoulder, and upper back muscles. Strengthening these areas can provide better support to the neck, improve posture, and reduce the stress on cervical spine structures.
- **Postural Corrections:** Postural training involves teaching patients how to maintain proper neck and spine alignment, especially during daily activities.

Our therapy programs also play a vital role in long-term management and help significantly reduce headache frequency and intensity and improve neck function and overall quality of life.

You will notice less stiffness and greater ease in neck movement, along with reducing or eliminating the headaches altogether. The key to maintaining these improvements is continuing to do the exercises and techniques learned during therapy sessions and integrating them into daily routines to ensure long-term benefits and prevent future cervicogenic headaches.

Begin your journey to recovery today by booking your appointment with Empower Physical Therapy!

3 COMMON HEADACHES AND THEIR SOLUTIONS

Headaches are defined as any pain that occurs within the head. A lot of headaches are related to poor postural habits, improper or repetitive technique problems, and other forms of mental, physical, and emotional stressors. Unfortunately, headaches can be severe and interfere with one's quality of life.

The most common type of headaches our team of physical therapists treats include the following:



Stress/Tension: This headache usually occurs when the muscles in the neck or scalp tense and contract and are frequently triggered by tensing the muscles in your shoulders from everyday annoyances.



Migraines: These headaches are characterized by painful throbbing or pulsing on one side of the head and are often accompanied by changes in vision, nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light, or sensitivity to sound.



Cluster Headaches: Cluster headaches occur in cyclical patterns or cluster periods and are considered one of the most painful types. Typically the intense pain is felt in or around one eye and on one side of the head.

If you've been living with nagging headaches, you will benefit from a consultation with one of our skilled physical therapists. We will help you figure out precisely what type of headache is plaguing you and how to resolve it once and for all!

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EXERCISE ESSENTIALS

Levator Scapulae Stretch

Start by sitting upright in a chair. Hold one side of the chair with your free arm to stabilize yourself. Turn your head away from that arm and grab the back of your head with your other arm. Slowly pull your head away from your arm that is holding the chair and tuck your chin down until you feel the stretch in the side of your neck. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat 3 times.



SALMON BURGERS



- 1 cup finely chopped red onion
- 1 cup thinly sliced fresh basil
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 pound salmon fillet
- 1 tbsp hot pepper sauce
- 1 large egg white
- Cooking spray
- 8 slices focaccia, toasted

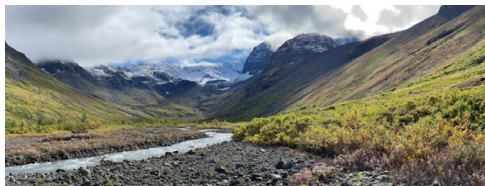
Combine first 5 ingredients in a large bowl. Combine hot pepper sauce and egg white in a small bowl; add egg white mixture to salmon mixture, stirring well to combine. Divide the mixture into 4 equal portions, shaping each into a ½-inch-thick patty. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add salmon patties, and cook 3 minutes on each side or until desired degree of doneness. Serve patties on toasted focaccia.



EMPOWERED PATIENTS

"I strongly recommend this place. They helped me make life changing progress. If you're in the market for someone to help you improve your health with PT give them a call. You won't regret it or feel disappointed. Best PT experience ever."

—Jessica O., actual 5 star review



SERVICES OFFERED

- Pelvic Floor Therapy
- Pain during Pregnancy
- Post-Surgical Rehabilitation
- Injury Prevention
- Personal Training
- Work Ergonomic Assessment
- Stay Strong Program
- Athletic Performance Improvement

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU!

ARE YOU IN PAIN? COME SEE EMPOWER PT!

Schedule your appointment today!

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