

# THE INTEGRATOR

HRUSKA CLINIC  
Restorative Physical Therapy Services

## PATTERNS AND POSITIONS....OH MY!

A large part of our role as physical therapists at the Hruska Clinic is to examine and educate our patients about what activities or occurrences contribute to their current symptoms. Certain positions we place ourselves in throughout daily living as well as with athletic activities can result in muscle overload and wear and tear on our joints. Often here at the Hruska Clinic we will advise alternate ways and instruction on how to reduce overuse patterned muscle, bone, and joints working in habitual patterns reflective of dominant behaviors. With this in mind, let us look at some activities and/or positions that contribute to your symptoms and positions that may be beneficial to achieve the optimal outcome. If you've ever participated in a high school, collegiate, sports and/or a fitness class, chances are you had a coach or fitness instructor tell you to catch your breath by recovering with your hands behind your head. The old-school way of thinking was that resting your hands on your knees was considered lazy and a sign of weakness. Resting your hands on your knees is actually more efficient way to recover from a hard effort than standing tall with your hands on your head.

It's worth pointing out that your body wants to go into the hands-on-knees position—it usually happens almost automatically. When you rest your hands on your knees, your body is in a better position for your diaphragm to function. Look at these three individuals, probably the best to ever play the game of basketball.



Our body is asymmetrical and because of that we are biased towards right-sided dominance and patterning. Asymmetry of the pelvis due to neurological and anatomical related issues allow most individuals to stand on the right leg. This moves the pelvis forward on the left and right shoulder to be lower than the right. Be aware of how you do things, be aware of how you could possibly change an activity to keep you from biasing your right side of your body.



When you're eyeing a golf green place your left foot/knee in front of you some when you come up from the squatting position use your left leg.

Finally, be aware of your kid's positions while they are playing sports. When standing on the court or field make them aware of how they position themselves. Try to get them to stand on their left leg. Keep these things in mind the next time your on the course, playing a pick up game or watching your child on the field or court.



## BLEACHERS CAUSING YOU PAIN?

As we're in the full swing of summer, frequently we hear of the challenges related to summer sporting activities. One common topic that we hear about here at the Hruska Clinic is how uncomfortable it can be to sit on bleachers at the ball diamond. What we often find is the inherent nature of people rolling their pelvises forward and arching backs to manage the hardness of the bleachers. Unfortunately, this technique does little or nothing to make bleachers more comfortable and can bring on a host of other complaints, including low back, buttocks, and tailbone pain.

Here are some solutions to the bleacher problem. Try and make sure that you're sitting on your "sit bones" (technically, our ischial tuberosities). The easiest way to get into this position is to roll your pelvis back a little, which reduces the depth in your low back and helps round your back a little. If you're able, place your feet on the seat in front of you rather than on the floor board as this will help you achieve the above described position. Yet another addition to this positioning would be to rest your forearms on your thighs. Gives these things a try next time you are out at the ball field, your back and behind will thank you!

## SOMETIMES ALL YOU NEED IS A LITTLE INTEGRATION....

Every time we work with a patient, no matter the symptoms or history, our goal is to get that person to be able to utilize their body in the most efficient manner possible in order to minimize strain, compensation and injury and to promote recovery and healing. Whether people are recovering from injury, dealing with chronic pain or just looking to be able to do things they used to do with less aggravation we want to help that patient get their body into the best position they can to meet these goals.

There are many factors that your brain utilizes to set its posture/alignment. Therefore if we are trying to improve efficiency of movement, decrease stress and strain to the body, or improve each person's ability to rest we need to address these factors. One factor that we utilize a lot that isn't usually thought about is the way your teeth fit and feel in their normal bite (or occlusion). The way your teeth fit and feel as you close your mouth is one big sense that your brain uses to "set" your posture, particularly of the head and neck. If the fit and feel of your teeth (even if it's a "good" bite) doesn't "set" you in a good head and neck posture it can have a significant impact on your ability to move efficiently, rest and recover.

We commonly integrate with Dr. Chris Campbell, a dentist here in Lincoln, who does a great job fabricating and adjusting oral appliances or splints to help improve the impact someone's bite or tooth fit and feel has on their neck and posture. Dr. Campbell has helped with some of our more active patients including a cross country runner who was dealing with shin splints (and neck pain) who is now able to run pain free once her neck (and therefore the rest of her body) could rotate freely with her splint in. Another high performing runner was able to get back to running without hip pain (even after having orthopedic consultation and treatment on their hip). Another big help for some of our athletes is the ability to recover well. Often the ability to get good rest at night can be a limiting factor for some that may be helped out with a splint to keep their neck, airway, and body in a comfortable position at night.

Overall, if you are struggling to get better there may be some out of the box things impacting why you aren't getting better!

## SHOE OF THE MONTH *Asics Cumulus*

As the weather warms up, spring and summer activities ramp up. Baseball, softball, volleyball, and golf in particular see a lot of influx during this time. All of these activities require a swing or trunk rotation, typically to the left, and off of the right leg in the vast majority of individuals. The momentum of the back swing requires the ability to shift into the right hip and the right ankle to roll out (supinate) and the left to roll in (pronate). These biomechanics are easier to achieve in the vast majority of humans who are asymmetrical and right hand and right leg dominant (even left handed people). The momentum of this back swing coupled with right leg dominance with the ability to shift into the right hip can lead to "over" supination of the right ankle causing the ankle to roll out "too far" causing ankle sprains. Ankle sprains are much more common on the right versus the left side.

At the Hruska Clinic, to assist with re-training the right ankle to re-pronate (roll in) and the left ankle to supinate (roll out) with a left hip shift, a solid and narrow heel counter is needed.

The Asics Cumulus has been an amazing shoe to assist our ankle sprain patients to neurological re-train these biomechanics. Not only does the heel counter not collapse in, but it's also narrow allowing a heel hug on the calcaneus (heel bone). If you have had frequent ankle sprains this is a great shoe to consider with your PRI trained Physical Therapist at the Hruska Clinic.