

THE INTEGRATOR

HRUSKA  CLINIC™
Restorative Physical Therapy Services

October is PT
Month!!
Have you seen
your PT lately??

PT MYTHS.... DEBUNKED!

Myth 1: Physical Therapy is Painful.

Fact: Physical therapists seek to minimize your pain and discomfort--including chronic or long-term pain.

Myth 2: Physical Therapy is only for injuries and accidents.

Fact: Physical Therapists do a lot more than just stretch and strengthen weak muscles after and injury or surgery. They are skilled at evaluating and diagnosing potential problems BEFORE they lead to more serious conditions.

Myth 3: Surgery is my only option.

Fact: In many cases, physical therapy has been shown to be as effective as surgery in treating a wide range of conditions.

Myth 4: Your PT will tell you to stop doing what you love.

Fact: Your Physical Therapist's number one goal is just the opposite--they want to get you back to doing what you love ASAP!

PT FOR BREATHING? BREATHING FOR PT?

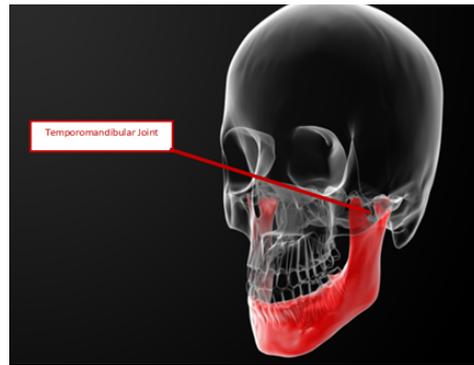
If you've been a patient here at the Hruska Clinic no doubt you've probably had to incorporate breathing into your exercise routine. Even if you were doing an exercise to help your knee or hip pain you probably had some breathing activity associated with it. Why? We feel strongly that the way you breathe (or don't) has a strong impact on the way your body functions. You have to breathe tens of thousands of times a day. If you are doing it well, you'll probably feel pretty well. And if you aren't doing it well.... Well I think you know where we are going. Breathing is one of those things that we take for granted...until you can't do it.

Breathing is an activity that you do all day, every day. It is the only activity that is both automatically controlled (you don't have to think about doing it) and volitional (you can directly control it) so it is a unique activity in its power in your body. It requires muscles to work, tubes (airways in necks) to be open, ribs, lungs, and guts to move (expand and contract), and of course the function of the lungs to happen easily. If any of those things; the strength or power of the muscles, the openness (position) of the tubes or the flexibility of the spine, ribs, and lungs is not ideal you will have challenges with your breathing. It may not feel like challenged breathing, it might just feel like neck tension, but that is because the secondary breathing muscles are having to work harder. Your low back stiffness? That could due to poor abdominal control. The "knots" under and around your shoulder blade? Poor rib movement under that shoulder blade with each breath. Or it could feel like more traditional breathing difficulties like poor sleep quality, shortness of breath with activity, or general fatigue.

Our goal for our patients when treating any symptom is to ensure that the whole body, including, and especially, the way you breathe is working in an effective, efficient manner!

Oh my aching jaw...

The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is one of the most unique joints of the human body as it is two joints in one. The two joints, one on each side of the head near your ears, are connected by your jawbone/ mandible. Because your mandible is one bone, you cannot move one temporomandibular joint without moving the other. These joints are perhaps one of the most utilized joints in the body.



These joints allow you to open and close your mouth, which allows one to talk, chew, and yawn. During chewing, these joints sustain an enormous amount of pressure depending upon, the position of the upper and lower teeth, the position of your head, and the position of your neck.

Symptoms of temporomandibular disorders include headaches, tenderness of the chewing muscles, and clicking/ popping or locking of the joints. Other symptoms include pain or stiffness in the neck and shoulders, dizziness, earaches, or fullness in the ears.

Dental occlusion is defined as the way the teeth meet when the lower jaw (mandible) and upper jaw (maxilla) come together. This position of your teeth reflects the position of your head and neck at rest. Your brain relies on patterns of muscular stability for upright posture and balance. Poor occlusion or bite references can lead to compensatory patterns of movement and posture that can eventually contribute to jaw pain, headaches, and/or dizziness.

Many people think that this is an area of the body that is only treated by a dentist. What most people don't know, is that **physical therapy can help with TMJ dysfunction**. Physical therapists place emphasis in the way that muscles, bones, and other soft tissues interrelate. The temporomandibular joints are no different. A Hruska Clinic physical therapist can assist in treating your TMJ, by reducing joint pain, increasing one's ability to open and close mouth, decreasing headaches, and improving one's posture!

CAN PT HELP MY PERFORMANCE?

Performance in sports and recreational activities involves both mental and physical integration to execute activity at the best level. Focusing on the physical execution and to perform our "best" your joints and muscles optimally need to be operate from a mid-range. If you bend your elbow all the way in, or straighten it all the way out, your bicep muscle won't be in the optimal position to provide you strength. However, if you bend your elbow in the mid-range the bicep is the strongest in this position.

Postural Restoration, a type of physical therapy provided at the Hruska Clinic takes into consideration having the body in a "neutral" position in the neck, trunk, and pelvis. Many of the patients we see come into our clinic in a "non-neutral" state. If you're not neutral, or the body is out of alignment, joints aren't in the correct position, which can cause some muscles to over perform and other muscle to under perform. This suboptimal joint and muscle positioning will decrease the body's ability to perform at its peak level and can increase the risk for injury.

Our goal at the clinic is to obtain a neutral state in neck, trunk, and pelvis. Once this is obtained, we then re-pattern the body with correct muscle inhibition or facilitation to allow the body to stabilize with the muscles in the body in the mid-range. This allows the body to move and flow from forward and back and side to side for optimal performance.

PT FOR PREVENTION

I'm sure for most people if the topic of physical therapy were to come up, rehabilitation is what would be associated with the profession. Certainly that can comprise the lion's share of our work, however, physical therapy can provide preventative needs as well. One of the main things that people want to prevent when they come to physical therapy is surgery. We have worked with numerous patients that have sought our care and have been able to avoid arthroscopic knee surgery, knee or hip replacements, back surgery, shoulder surgery, and more.

How can this happen? Frequently, imbalanced, asymmetrical muscle or body function can contribute to forces on the body that lead to pain and put us at risk for serious injury. When caught early enough, even if it seems like you've reached the point of no return, surgery can frequently be prevented.

People engaged in repetitive activities are at risk for injury, even if they feel no pain. Athletes often fall into this category. Examples include volleyball outside hitters, baseball or softball pitchers, golfers, tennis players, etc. People with physically demanding jobs such as construction workers or factory workers can fit this category as well. Even people who work at a desk and use a keyboard all day, or are always using a mouse with the same hand can benefit from activities that a physical therapist can provide to prevent chronic arm/hand pain, back and neck pain, and headaches.

If you or someone you know would like to learn more, please feel free to contact our office to set up a time to visit with one of our physical therapists.