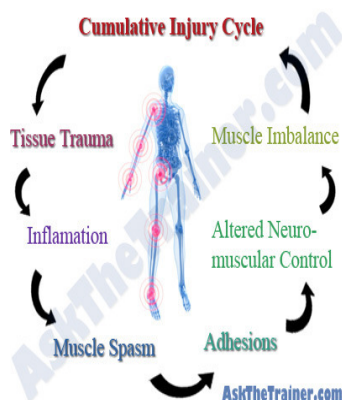




Why Is Emphasis On Body Posture So Important?

The best posture is one in which the body segments are balanced in the position of optimal alignment and maximum support, with full mobility available. Optimal posture allows for pain-free movement with a minimum of energy expenditure. Deviations from the ideal, efficient alignment eventually result in the production of chronic pain symptoms. The cumulative injury cycle illustrates how muscle imbalances originate. A trauma occurs which results from repetitive motion with poor dynamic posture. The trauma causes inflammation, which causes your muscles to spasm and to develop knots or adhesions. The adhesions decrease the functionality of your muscles which your brain cannot control properly. The inability of your nervous system to maintain proper postural alignment causes muscle imbalances. If you do not correct your muscular imbalances the cycle will repeat over and over and possibly get progressively worse.



A comprehensive exercise and stretch regimen are very important in regaining postural muscle balance. Avoid overworking muscles that are already strong. Identify areas of muscle weakness and focus on building strength in these areas. Stretch the stronger muscles so that they are not fighting with the weaker ones.

In some cases, it is beneficial to have a postural evaluation conducted by your physician. Many times, because of lack of support of the lower extremities, custom made orthotic foot support may be needed. Persistent faulty postural alignment is almost always associated with an imbalance in the surrounding musculature. Sustained misalignments result in some muscles becoming shortened and others developing a constant overstretch. When certain muscles are used more frequently (at work, or during sports), they get stronger and tighter, while the underutilized opposing muscles are, by comparison, weaker. The eventual consequence is a malposition of the involved joint(s).

It is very common to find tightness in the chest muscles and weakness in the upper back muscles. These muscle imbalances develop into the very common postural pattern of forward shoulders and increased rounding of the upper back. Similar muscle imbalances are frequently found in the lumbar spine and pelvic region. The hip flexor muscles get tight, while the *gluteus maximus* muscles become weak, thereby interfering with full hip extension during gait (walking). We see this imbalance often with the “elderly shuffle”.

You may feel the difference in length of your hamstrings when you sit down. When you stand, the muscles are lengthened. Sitting shortens your hamstrings, even with good posture. If you sit for prolonged periods of time, you will be prone to chronic hamstring tightness and sciatica.

What To Do With Leftover Medications

Ever wonder what to do with the unused medication in your cabinet? The FDA recommends flushing certain meds down the toilet, but they may end up in rivers, lakes and drinking water, causing more harm than good. The most environmentally responsible action is to find a medication take-back program. Two programs exist in the area (see below for details).

If unable to dispose of drugs through a take-back program, or if you have a drug that shouldn't be flushed, the FDA recommends taking the medication out of the original container, mixing it with coffee grounds, kitty litter or dirt, and putting this blend in a plastic container or a sealable plastic bag. Put the container or bag into the regular garbage. Scratch off prescription labels and other identifying information on the original container to protect yourself, and recycle or dispose of the container.

For a list of flushable medications, consult the Wellness Board. The take-back programs in our area are listed below.

HazWaste
90 Sargent Drive
New Haven, CT 06511
203-401-2712

Advanced Liquid Recycling
(United Oil Recovery)
14-16 West Main Street
Meriden, CT 06451

Reflexologist

April 14th from 9:00am-11:00am
Wellness Center Lobby
Complimentary Reflexology will be available
Sign up in the Wellness Center beginning April 5th

Exercise Class Changes

Thursday, April 15th **NO Fit Steps 2**
Monday, April 19th **NO Blue Aquatic Class.**
Please join Green Aquatic Class



Words of Wisdom

No one grows old by living,
only by losing interest in living!



Why do I Yawn When I Exercise?

We usually think of yawning as a sign of sleepiness, but experts say that is not always the case. Although it is true that we tend to yawn near bedtime, we also yawn in the morning when we wake up. Athletes yawn before they compete (think speedskater Apolo Anton Ohno!) and we yawn in response to seeing someone else yawn, even if we are not sleepy or bored. It is not unusual to yawn during exercise.

Scientists know that yawning is a semi-voluntary action, meaning that it is partly a reflex, and it is under the control of several neurotransmitters in the hypothalamus of the brain. Yawning distributes surfactant, a chemical that coats alveoli (air sacs in the lungs), helping to keep them open. Fetuses yawn in the womb!

What scientists don't know is why we yawn. One theory is that yawning cools the brain, helping keep it at the correct temperature to stay alert. It may be that the alveoli need a boost to stay open or that yawning is just a reflex. There is no explanation for why we yawn during exercise, but it is nothing to worry about and it is more common than you think!

SAVE THE DATE

Oral Health and the Mouth-Body Connection

Wednesday, May 5th
10:30am
Christ Chapel

This presentation will be given by the office of Dr. Prezioso, D.D.S. and will include information on the affects of medications on oral health and heart disease and diabetes on oral health.

The Senility Prayer

God grant me the senility
To forget the people
I never liked anyway,
The good fortune
To run into the ones I do,
And the eyesight
To tell the difference.