



THE PHYSICAL THERAPY SPECIALTY CENTER

a division of Primary Care Partners

NEWSLETTER

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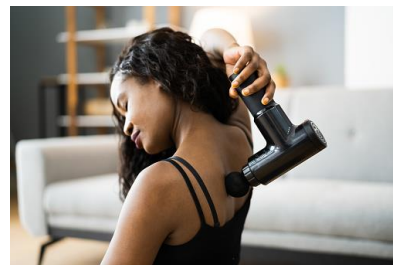
Blake Poole, PT Tech

Teal Skoe, PT Tech

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MASSAGE GUNS – ARE THEY WORTH ALL THE HYPE?


Who received one of those nifty massage guns for Christmas? Next question is, are you scared to use it?!? These fancy tools can be a bit intimidating and can occasionally cause more harm than good. Most pain is caused by muscle tension and trigger points. There are various ways to release a trigger point and thus result in a decrease in pain. Massage guns are one of the tools that can assist in releasing trigger points. A massage gun can help with loosening the knotted tissue, but it is important to approach this treatment with a bit of knowledge and a plan. Check out this month's blog regarding massage guns and if they are a fad or worth the hype.



AROUND THE CLINIC:

With football in the air and sadly wrapping up soon we all decided to give you some results of a fun survey we did to let you all know our favorite football teams as well as everyone's pick for the winner of the Superbowl. See if we picked your team!

	<u>Favorite Team</u>	<u>Superbowl Pick</u>
Tara Albright	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	Philadelphia Eagles
Karen Hayter	Denver Broncos	Philadelphia Eagles
Laurel Sampson	Kansas City Chiefs	Kansas City Chiefs
Dorian Campisi	Philadelphia Eagles	Philadelphia Eagles
Kari Mullaney	Denver Broncos	Kansas City Chiefs
Teal Skoe	Minnesota Vikings	Kansas City Cheifs

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Spotlight Diagnosis of the Month

Diagnosis: Lumbar Radiculopathy vs. Sciatica

What is it: *Lumbar Radiculopathy* refers to pain from the back radiating into the leg. This pain is associated with compression of the nerves due to one or more of the following: inflammation, “wear and tear”, injury or trauma, disc bulge or herniation, cysts, or narrowing of the spinal canal (stenosis).

Sciatica is more of a general symptom of pain radiating along the pathway of the sciatic nerve which runs along the back side of the thigh. Sciatica can be related to radiculopathy (i.e. pain radiating into the limb). It can also be a symptom associated with other sources such as a tight piriformis muscle or pain associated with trigger points in gluteal muscles. Sciatica is considered to be more of a general description of the symptoms rather than an exact identification of the source of the pain.

Common Symptoms:


- Pain along a lower limb
- Numbness and/or tingling into the affected limb
- Weakness in the affected limb
- Pain can be throbbing, aching, sharp, dull, burning or pressure
- Note – if significant, new onset of weakness in affected limb occurs and / or any new onset of bowel or bladder incontinence, seek emergency care

How PT can help: Physical Therapy (PT) treatment for lumbar radiculopathy includes focusing initially on reduction of inflammation and pain. This may include modalities such as ultrasound, Estim/TENS and mechanical traction. PT can complete gentle stretches and hands on manual therapy as tolerated. PT will assess muscle and spinal alignment imbalances, ways to decompress the irritated nerve, and myofascial and trigger point tightness through the region to determine contributing factors to the pain symptoms. PT will establish a home program for exercises as well as complete education regarding pacing, posture, body mechanics, positions to avoid, and strengthening exercises to maximize the potential for improvement. Occupational therapy may also be beneficial to address modifications or helpful adaptive equipment to promote improved safety and tolerance for activities of daily living.

This section is to provide details about commonly seen diagnoses or injuries in our clinic and how Therapy may help.

Appointment reminders:

We have transitioned to electronic appointment reminders. A text message will be sent to the cell phone number we have on file. You will also receive an email for your appointment reminder to the email we have on file. If you are not receiving these reminders or have questions, please stop by the front desk to ensure we have all of your up to date contact information.

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