

# THE PHYSICAL THERAPY SPECIALTY CENTER NEWSLETTER



The Physical Therapy  
Specialty Center  
*a division of Primary Care Partners*

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## HEADACHES

Headaches can be a real pain in the neck. It may not come as a surprise to hear that about half of the people on Earth have experienced a headache sometime in the past year. For some, this is a daily experience while others seem only susceptible under certain conditions. Several types of headaches exist, each with their own distinguishing features and facets, but with some common underlying themes. For example - did you know there are some headache types that have very little to do with the head at all? Our blog discussion this month focuses on a particular type of headache - cervicogenic headache - and how physical therapy can help to manage the associated symptoms. While headaches can certainly be an added challenge to an already challenging day, there are ways physical therapy can help reduce a headache's impact! Head over to our blog: [ptscgj.com/blog](http://ptscgj.com/blog) to learn more.

**Around the clinic:** October is special - it is National Physical Therapy Month. Physical Therapy is a specialty service that provides more than just exercise. Most physical therapists (PT's) go to school for 7-8 years to be able to practice PT. Current programs graduate practitioners at a doctoral level degree, other providers whom have practiced for a while hold bachelor and master's degrees. PT's are normally found in clinics like ours, but are also found in hospital emergency rooms, wound care specialty centers, and in specialized sport specific settings. PT's have skills well beyond exercise prescription - they are trained with diagnostic tests and measures, many of which are the same tests your primary care doctor would perform, allowing for excellent care and treatment. Further, PT's and PTA's (Physical Therapy Assistants) can assist with a variety of injuries/diseases such as surgical recovery, Parkinson's disease, strokes, TMJ (jaw pain), vertigo, and concussions. Additionally, physical therapy can prevent further injury and yield greater results than rest, medication, and surgery alone. Be sure to thank your PT this month and refer a friend that may not be aware of the wonderful services physical therapy offers.

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# Therapy Minutes

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This section is to keep you up to date and provide education regarding PT, OT, and Speech Therapy

## **Physical Therapy: Orthotics**

Most people have heard about orthotics and likely have had experiences with both good and poor types. The goal of an orthotic is to keep your foot and ankle in optimal posturing allowing for proper mechanics and loading as we walk/stand. There are many types of orthotics ranging from custom, to over the counter. Many recent studies have shown that a good pair of over the counter orthotics are just as beneficial as the expensive custom ones. The key to finding a good pair is finding some that fits YOUR feet. Not all feet are equal and orthotics are designed differently depending on such feet. Physical therapists can assess your feet and symptoms allowing for a suggestion and guided decision regarding your next pair of orthotics. This not only will make your feet happy, but likely your wallet as well. Come see us today for an orthotic assessment and check out our blog for more information!

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## **Occupational Therapy: Headaches and OT**

Headaches, including migraines, are invisible diseases that can significantly affect our ability to function at home, school, work, and leisure activities. The symptoms associated with headaches include but are not limited to stress, anxiety, and depression. It is often difficult for a person to describe the pain. They can be triggered by lifestyle and/or environmental factors. Lifestyle changes can have a positive outcome for those that suffer from headache disorders. Some of these changes include: having a consistent daily routine, getting a good night sleep, and finding ways to reduce stress.

Occupational therapists can help with identifying the triggers, learning coping strategies, implementing pacing and energy conservation techniques, understanding ergonomic and body mechanics, principles to modifying your environment at work and home, learning assertive communication skills, using appropriate adaptive equipment, engaging in physical activities, and finding activities that you enjoy. Give OT a try and see the difference.

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## **Speech Therapy: Benefit of Providing Choice Making Opportunities for Children**

Providing children with simple choice making opportunities in their daily routines has many benefits. Choices empower children while also promoting their speech, language, and cognitive development. Giving children choices also helps them feel like they have some control over their lives in a positive manner.

When giving the child a choice, label the two choices and then hold up the chosen item near your mouth and label it again. This draws the child's attention to your face and how you are saying the word while also teaching the child the names of preferred items. Here are several important benefits to building choices into your child's daily routine.

- \* Encourage speech and language development
- \* Minimize behavioral issues
- \* Build confidence
- \* Promote a sense of value
- \* Teach responsibility
- \* Foster decision making and creativity
- \* Develop problem solving skills

Choice-making is an effective speech and language stimulation technique used in pediatric speech therapy at PTSC. The power of a small choice can go a long way!

