

LIBERTY NEWS  
**REAL CARE. REAL RESULTS.  
FOR REAL LIFE**

**NORTH CENTRAL**

415 Embassy Oaks Dr. #202  
San Antonio, TX 78216

210.490.4738

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415 Embassy Oaks Dr. #202, San Antonio, TX 78216  
210.490.4738

**NORTHEAST**

2130 NE Loop 410, Ste #212, San Antonio, TX 78217  
210.656.5848

**SOUTHSIDE**

2600 SW Military Dr. #206, San Antonio, TX 78224  
210.922.6292

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**FEEL THE BURN FROM YOUR LIVING ROOM  
3 ONLINE WORKOUT PLATFORMS TO TRY RIGHT NOW**

Your living room might not be the most conducive environment for a good workout. But as the world continues to grapple with the effects of the coronavirus, working out at the gym, or any other public facility, is out of the question for many of us. Fortunately, you can still work up a sweat from home with the right workout videos for a fraction of the cost of a monthly gym membership. Here are a few worth your time and money!

**Alo Moves**

Alo is one of the most prominent outfitters for yoga lovers everywhere, but the workout routines offered through Alo Moves go beyond just yoga and meditation. Whether you're new to working out or a seasoned fitness buff, you can find thousands of workout routines to follow along with on AloMoves.com. You can even download

routines to your phone and follow along with them in your backyard or at the park, all for just \$20 a month.

**P.volve**

While P.volve only has around 200 workouts available through its online platform right now, new videos are being added every week. If you're looking for resistance-based, high-intensity, low-impact workouts, this is the platform for you. You can customize a workout plan based on which body parts you want to strengthen and even buy optional equipment to use at home. Get access to the entire fitness library for a monthly fee of \$20 or save by paying an annual fee of \$135 at Pvolve.com.

**Tone It Up**

Tone It Up is more of a fitness community than a workout program,



but the website still offers a variety of both free and paid workouts plus a paid nutrition plan. Try high-intensity interval training (HIIT), cardio, a total-body workout, or one geared toward specific body parts, like abs or glutes. Through the Studio Tone It Up app, which costs \$15, you can get additional workouts delivered to you weekly.

Even if they're not what you're used to, doing these online workouts can ensure you don't lose the fitness you've worked so hard to gain. Try one of them today!

**DON'T LET SLEEP SLIP AWAY  
THESE TIPS ARE YOUR TICKET TO DREAMLAND**

If you follow us on Facebook, you may have seen a video from Dr. Parazo about why sleep is so important to our health and our body's recovery processes. If you missed that informational video, don't worry! We're going to talk all about it here because getting better sleep is something we just can't overlook.

Research has shown that sleep can influence pain. Sleep regulation and pain modulation (our body's ability to interpret pain) are both controlled by the same nerve processes in our body. That means the worse your sleep is, the worse your pain is too. This relationship between sleep and pain means those who get less sleep, experience delays in falling asleep, or have more nighttime disturbances (like waking up frequently), will likely have an increased sensitivity to pain.

When it comes to physical therapy, feeling more pain is never good for recovery. Pain can slow the process down immensely, not to mention, cause you to feel unmotivated to continue your regimen. And while your poor sleep is increasing your pain sensitivity, it's also giving your body a compromised immune system, poor digestion, decreased focus, and mood swings. Improper sleep plagues such a large portion of our population in so many drastic ways that insufficient sleep is actually considered a public health crisis by the CDC.

But all is not lost! If you're a poor sleeper, there are plenty of things you

can try to get the sleep you need. Here are a few we like to recommend to patients who tell us they're having trouble catching z's:

- **Go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day.** This can help set a natural biological clock that makes it easier to fall asleep and wake up.
- **Avoid caffeine at least four hours before bedtime.** Not only can it keep you from falling asleep, but it can increase the number of times you wake up during the night.
- **Don't take naps during the day.** Stay awake so that you feel tired enough to fall asleep at night. If you *must* take a nap, limit it to 30 minutes.
- **Make your sleeping environment relaxing.** Avoid too much light or noise, and stop using electronics that emit blue light within 30 minutes of going to sleep. Also keep the temperature of the room comfortable.
- **Don't eat large meals within 3 hours of bedtime.** Your digestive system slows down while you sleep, which can cause heartburn that keeps you awake. Light snacks are okay, but avoid spicy food and too much liquid, for obvious reasons.
- **Don't drink alcohol or smoke within three hours of bedtime.** Alcohol may put you to sleep, but it increases



the number of times you wake up at night. Nicotine is a stimulant that makes it harder to fall asleep.

- **Don't exercise within 3 hours of bedtime.** A workout can stimulate your body and brain, making it harder to fall asleep. But be sure to exercise earlier in the day, as it can help you sleep better.
- **Develop a bedtime routine.** Activities like a warm bath, reading a book, meditating, or stretching can relax your brain and body into preparing for sleep.

You may have always thought of yourself as "just a poor sleeper," but you don't have to be! There are many ways to help your body get the sleep it needs, so be sure to consult a doctor about your best course of action. And as always, we're here to help our patients find what works for them, so feel free to reach out if you need us.

*-Dr. Mary Lou Lugo*



# HOW STRESS CAN LEAD TO INJURY

## AND HOW YOU CAN STOP IT

While it's pretty intuitive that physical stressors can cause physical injuries, you might not know that mental and emotional stress can also lead to musculoskeletal injuries that require physical therapy. That's right — a lack of sleep, a busy workweek, and other stressful life events can make you more prone to injury. Why is this, and how can you prevent the stresses of everyday life from causing you bodily harm?

When you experience stress, your body does a few things that naturally put you at an increased risk of injury. First, stress causes your nerves to function inefficiently. Second, stressful situations lead to higher levels of cortisol in the body, a hormone that inhibits muscle repair and immune system function. If you're always dealing with stressful situations, then you're constantly leaving your body open to physical injury.

You can prevent injuries with all sorts of physical means, but if you fail to address your mental and emotional health, you'll still be at a heightened risk. While you might not be able to prevent every stressful situation from ever happening, you can control how you react when one does occur.

A few simple things you can do to prevent mental stress are to get enough sleep, maintain a healthy diet, and drink plenty of water. If any of these basic stress inhibitors are absent from your daily routine, focus on incorporating them in to alleviate



some of your stress. That said, practicing simple breathing exercises or another form of meditation can also be helpful, especially if you're looking for a physical way to mentally unwind after a stressful day.

While learning about how much stress hurts you can be *even more* stressful, you can find some peace knowing that with a few simple changes to your routine, you can prevent your stress from causing physical injury.

## DO WHAT YOU LOVE AND KEEP YOUR BODY MOVING

### HOW HIIT BENEFITS PEOPLE OF ALL AGES

High-intensity interval training (HIIT) is one of the best ways to burn fat, build muscle, and give yourself a better chance at a longer, healthier life. HIIT workouts are characterized by brief periods (30 seconds to a few minutes) of high-intensity exercise, followed by periods of low- or moderate-intensity exercise. However, what makes these workouts truly remarkable is just how much they can benefit people in every age group.

According to Mayo Clinic research, HIIT workouts provide unique benefits to the body on a cellular level. The brief, vigorous exercises actually increase your metabolism and improve the health of mitochondria, the powerhouses that create energy within the cells. By energizing your cells, you can actually reverse the decline in muscle health that



occurs as people age. Energizing cells through HIIT benefits everyone, but these workouts can be of particular benefit to those over age 65. Seniors experience diminishing returns on energy produced by their bodies at a cellular level, and HIIT has been shown to reverse that process even in advanced age.

HIIT workouts also have many other advantages for people of all ages. The exercises don't necessarily require any equipment, and you can even see results from adding high-intensity intervals to daily walks. Those with health conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease, can still participate in HIIT. In fact, Healthline reports that HIIT workouts can reduce heart rate, blood pressure, and blood sugar. However, the biggest draw to HIIT exercises is just how much of a timesaver they are. A few minutes of high-intensity movement can be just as beneficial as roughly 45 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise.

You can incorporate HIIT exercises into whatever activities you enjoy, such as walking, cardio exercises, and strength training. If you're affected by weak joints, you can incorporate HIIT into lower impact exercises, such as swimming or cycling. If you want to feel energized while doing the things you love, then HIIT just might be something you want to try. Just remember to keep a steady pace and don't overdo it!

# FOODS FOR A FASTER RECOVERY

## THE NUTRIENTS YOU NEED DURING PHYSICAL THERAPY

Attending your physical therapy appointments and doing your at-home exercises as instructed by your PT are crucial parts of your recovery process. However, they're not the only important steps you should take. What you eat can affect how quickly and well you heal just as much as your dedication to your exercises. By incorporating a few of these foods into your diet, you can heal faster and come back stronger than ever before.

### Omega-3 Fatty Acids

There are three phases to the healing process: inflammation, proliferation, and remodeling. While you might think that inflammation is a bad thing, it's actually a normal and necessary part of healing. That said, you should still try to reduce inflammation, as it can be harmful in excess. Foods containing omega-3 fatty acids do wonders to control inflammation. Plus, our bodies can't make omega-3 fatty acids naturally, so we have to get them from what we consume. Foods that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids include



fatty fish, olive oil, avocados, pecans, walnuts, and almonds.

### Antioxidant-Rich Fruits and Vegetables

Along with omega-3 fatty acids, the antioxidants from fruits and vegetables can also go a long way in reducing inflammation. Broccoli contains vitamins A, C, and K, as well as folic acid and several different minerals. (**Pro Tip:** Cook your broccoli to maximize these nutrients!) Citrus fruits and peppers have high levels of vitamin C, and peppers have high levels of beta-carotene as well. Additionally, turmeric and garlic work wonders during the healing process.

### Protein-Rich Meats, Nuts, and Dairy Products

When it comes to the proliferation and remodeling stages of healing, healthy sources of protein are the way to go. Lean meats like poultry and fish are easy sources of protein, but if you don't eat meat, you can also get protein from beans, eggs, nuts, and dairy products. Protein-rich foods will help heal muscles and bones and prevent muscle atrophy. It's incredible what the body can do with just a few intentionally consumed superfoods!

## TAKE A BREAK!



## EASY STUFFED SWEET POTATOES

Inspired by EatingWell.com

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 medium sweet potatoes
- 1 15-oz can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp coriander
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped

### DIRECTIONS

1. With a fork, prick each sweet potato a few times. Microwave the potatoes on high 12-15 minutes, or until cooked through.
2. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the beans, tomatoes, olive oil, cumin, coriander, and salt. When the potatoes are done, microwave the mixture on high for 2-3 minutes.
3. Cool potatoes slightly, then cut each potato open lengthwise. Pull the halves apart to create space to spoon the warm bean salsa inside.
4. Add a scoop of sour cream to each potato, garnish with cilantro, and serve!