

Articulation

Hanneken Full Potential Physical Therapy Newsletter November 2010

OUR BODIES IN BALANCE

Are you curious to understand the source of your chronic low back pain? Or have you felt confused about a nagging injury that you have difficulty recovering from? If you don't recall a specific event which caused your pain, your trouble may be a result of postural imbalance. When your body is imbalanced from left to right, or in another plane, your joints and muscles function differently. You may be forced to rely on the same small group of muscles for strength, while others are not in a position to function well and become weak. This imbalance can result in muscle strain, or pain and compression in certain joints. Treating exclusively the area that hurts may not solve your problem as well as addressing the cause. To understand your pain, it is important to recognize some of the sources of your imbalance.

As we age, every person displays some degree of natural imbalance. For most people, a pattern emerges that depends on our anatomy and the activities we do on a daily basis. Each person uniquely compensates for this pattern. When standing, we all have a tendency to shift our weight onto our right leg, regardless of whether or not we are right handed. This is because our weight is unevenly distributed in our bodies. For example, we have a liver on the right, and an extra lobe to the right lung, which shifts our center of gravity to the right side. In the upper body, our heart is slightly to the left. The list goes on and on, including our blood vessels, brain and other organ systems. This asymmetry naturally creates an imbalance for which our

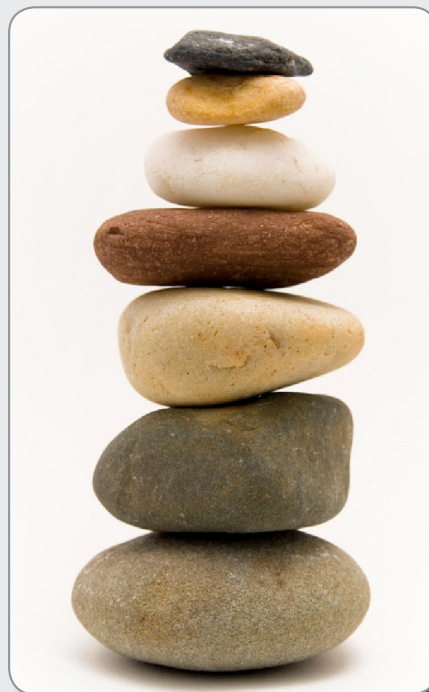
bodies are very capable of compensating.

Now take that naturally occurring anatomical imbalance, and add it into our functional life. Most people are right handed, and we reach overhead and in front of our bodies all day long with our right arm. We clean with the right arm, we eat with the right hand, and we shift our weight to the right so that we feel secure as we rotate and lift things from the floor to the counter. Our environment has accommodated this dominance with cars that shift gears on the right, and refrigerators that open to the right, and sports that take advantage of our strength and coordination on the right side. These things allow us to function more easily on a daily basis, but enforce our asymmetrical bodies. Check yourself at home: Is it as easy for you to shift your weight onto the left leg as it is your right

leg? Do you find that your right shoulder seems to hang lower, or that you are always sore in the right side of your low back? Maybe you wear one shoe down more quickly than the other. Our bodies are beautifully designed to manage these imbalances, until the scale tips too far in one direction.

To prevent injuries from overuse, our bodies need to be in equilibrium. We need to be able to shift our weight to the left, and rotate our legs and trunks symmetrically. Repetitive motions or overuse of a dominant system on a body with incorrect alignment causes pain and injury. Asymmetrical standing or sitting positions can eventually lead to aches at the end of the day, or worse yet, a significant injury like a disc bulge or blown knee. Since our bodies are so capable of making up for lost mobility, it may not become apparent that we are imbalanced until we are unable to compensate for it anymore and areas of our body become painful.

Full Potential Physical Therapists are trained to recognize normal imbalances, and the unique way your body may be compensating for areas that are tight, weak or overused. We can help you to balance muscle activity, improve unstable areas, and maximize your efficiency in athletics or daily life. If your body is giving you pain, don't ignore it. This is your system's way of telling you that something is not right. You deserve to function without pain, and the answer to your problem may be corrected with putting yourself back into postural balance.



Allison Zeeb

Great Fall Recipes: Take Advantage of What Is In Season

Apple Pie in a Paper Bag

Jack VandenBerg

Crust:

- 1 ½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ teaspoons sugar
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons milk

Stir together dry ingredients in pie pan. Mix oil and milk together, than add to dry mix in pie pan. Shape into pan and gently press down.

Pie Filling:

- 2 1/2 lbs tart apples, sliced (about 8 cups)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 2 tablespoons flour
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- Dash of nutmeg

Toss together apples and lemon juice in a large bowl. Combine sugar, flour, cinnamon and nutmeg, and mix with apples until well coated. Place in pie crust.

Pie Topping:

- ½ cup flour
- ½ cup very soft butter
- ¼ cup white sugar
- ¼ cup brown sugar, packed

Combine topping ingredients and stir into a smooth paste. Spread over apples. Place pie in a large paper bag. Close bag ends and staple together with 2-4 staples. Bake at 400 degrees for 1 hour and 10 minutes for metal pan, or 1 hour and 20 minutes for glass pan. Let cool on wire rack for 10 minutes, then open bag carefully.



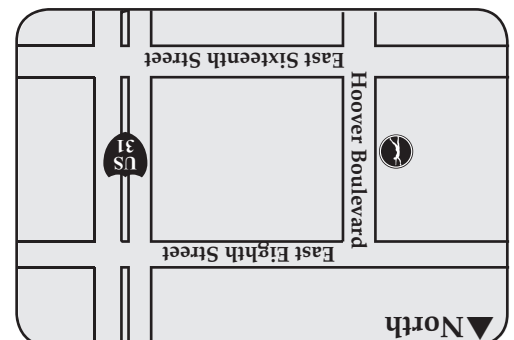
Pumpkin Bread

Allison Zeeb

- 3 cups sugar
- 1 cup oil
- 4 eggs
- 3 ½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 cups packed pumpkin
- 2/3 cup water
- Optional: Add ½ cup dried cherries and/or pecans

Blend sugar, oil and eggs. Add dry ingredients and mix. Pour into greased loaf pans, and bake at 325 degrees for 1 hour.

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