



# STRESS

## A Silent Culprit Behind Your Aching Neck

Take the first step to a healthier, stronger,  
and more active you! Call today!

**253.220.4317**





# STRESS

## A SILENT CULPRIT BEHIND YOUR ACHING NECK

Do you notice your neck seems to hurt more when you are stressed? Do you find yourself rubbing your neck after a difficult day on the job? You might be suffering from stress-related neck pain. During times of high stress and anxiety, our muscles tense up. As muscles tighten, the more pressure and pain they cause.

The pain and tension can interfere with our ability to work and do our daily activities. It can also interfere with the enjoyment of your life including recreational activities and spending time with friends and family.

The good news is that with guidance from your physical therapist you can find solutions to your pain and how to manage your stress, so you can get back to living the life you enjoy!

Call Kintsugi Physical Therapy today to learn how we can help you to keep living the kind of life you want with less pain.

### What Is Causing My Neck Pain?

Our neck does not like to remain in any one position for extended periods, like when you're driving, looking down at your phone, or using a computer. Too often the posture we hold our neck is also contributing to our pain.

Prolonged sitting can lead to a forward head position resulting in tension to soft tissue (i.e. muscles, tendons, and ligaments) or negative changes to our blood flow.

The muscles of our neck function at their best when we move them. So holding our heads in one position leads to irritation of the muscles and affects our ability to move our head and neck. This loss of mobility leads to pain and less enjoyment of your daily activities.

### How Does Stress Cause Neck Pain?

Stress-induced neck pain is fairly common. The effects of stress on the body include the release of stress hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol, that when elevated for long durations, are associated with increased pain sensitivity. The more stress we experience the more likely we will also experience pain.

While chronic stress alone can trigger neck pain, a few factors can make it worse. Office environments tend to create neck pain problems. Modern offices confine people to chairs, poor posture, and little mobility.

In addition, a lot of people also spend a lot of time driving with poor posture and added stress due to traffic and road rage. The combination of all of these factors makes your chances of stress-related neck pain higher.

*Continued inside.*

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# STRESS: A SILENT CULPRIT BEHIND YOUR ACHING NECK

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## How Physical Therapy Can Help My Neck Pain

Neck pain can be alleviated with physical therapy. Neck pain is often caused by poor postural habits or sustained positions. Relief of this pain typically occurs immediately following the correction of the abnormal postures. An easy way to find good posture is to imagine your breast bone is lifted towards the sky. This will naturally cause your spine to straighten out – lifting you. This helps alleviate the tension immediately and is something you can do multiple times a day!

Physical therapists can target your pain's source by examining your symptoms. Then, they can offer exercises that stretch and/or relax your neck muscles.

For example, sit in a chair with your back resting against the back of the chair and simply lean your chest and shoulder back (i.e. over the top of the backrest). Keep your eyes forward and lean straight back. This is called a neck retraction and is very effective at alleviating tension!

In some cases, manual techniques including mobilizations or therapeutic massage are used to alleviate your pain and allow you to tolerate stretching. A custom-tailored program of neck exercises will assure your neck stays loose, limber, and healthy.

Your physical therapist can also teach you how to arrange your working environment ergonomically and recommend various stress reduction strategies to ensure healthy life behavior.

## Contact Our Clinic Today

If you're dealing with neck pain, you're not alone. Call our office today and schedule an assessment. Even if your neck pain is caused by stress, it still needs attention. We'll work side by side with your goals, creating the proactive, effective programs you need to achieve mobility once more. We offer the results you are looking for!

## ACAI SMOOTHIE BOWL



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup of apple juice
- 1 large banana sliced
- 1 1/2 cups of frozen berries
- 1/2 cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 frozen packet of acai berry puree (100 grams)
- Assorted toppings such as sliced almonds, berries, shredded coconut, granola, chia seeds, sliced banana, mint sprigs, etc.

**DIRECTIONS** Place the apple juice, banana, frozen berries, yogurt, honey and acai puree in the blender. Blend until thoroughly combined and smooth. Pour the smoothie into 2 deep bowls. Arrange the desired toppings over your smoothie bowls and serve.

<https://www.dinneratthezoo.com/acai-bowl-recipe/>

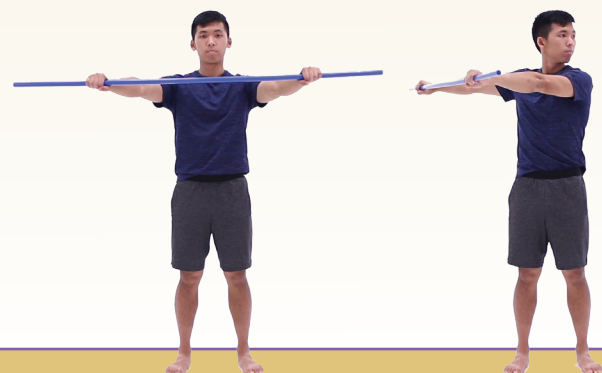


## EXERCISE TO TRY AT HOME

### NECK STRETCH

*Try this exercise to help relieve neck pain.*

Start by standing up straight holding a dowel down in front of you with both arms straight. Raise both arms up to shoulder height and rotate your arms and torso over to one side while simultaneously rotating your head over to the other side until you feel a stretch in your neck. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat for opposite side.



# 3 COMMON HEADACHES AND THEIR SOLUTIONS



Headaches are defined as any pain that occurs within the head. A lot of headaches are related to poor postural habits, improper or repetitive technique problems, and other forms of mental, physical, and emotional stressors. Unfortunately, headaches can be severe and interfere with one's quality of life.

The most common type of headaches our team of physical therapists treats include the following:



**Stress/Tension:** This headache usually occurs when the muscles in the neck or scalp tense and contract and are frequently triggered by tensing the muscles in your shoulders from everyday annoyances.



**Migraines:** These headaches are characterized by painful throbbing or pulsing on one side of the head and are often accompanied by changes in vision, nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light, or sensitivity to sound.



**Cluster Headaches:** Cluster headaches occur in cyclical patterns or cluster periods and are considered one of the most painful types. Typically the intense pain is felt in or around one eye and on one side of the head.

If you've been living with nagging headaches, you will benefit from a consultation with one of our skilled physical therapists. We will help you figure out precisely what type of headache is plaguing you and how to resolve it once and for all!

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## PATIENT EXPERIENCE

*"I cannot say enough good things about Kintsugi PT. I went there for some minor issues with my knees. I worked with both Aaron and Lori for a little over a month. First, they are both so knowledgeable in their field. They are also very friendly, and supportive. They gave me just the right exercises to do that didn't strain my knee but helped build up my legs. My knee pain is almost gone, and I contribute it to them. They are just a great staff and the facility is very positive. I am just in awe of how wonderful they are and how much they helped me." —Erin W.*



**We want to hear your PT Success Story!**

We appreciate hearing from you and will review your comments carefully. You're not only helping us, but our patients too!

Just scan the QR code and visit our review page.



**Thank You!**

**PAST PATIENTS DOING WHAT THEY LOVE**

***Wearing Kintsugi PT t-shirts.***

***Send us your pics wearing our shirt and you may see yourself in the newsletter.***



**Has Your Pain Come Back?**

**Come Back to PT!**

1. Keep up with your physical therapy exercises to relieve pain and prevent further injuries.
2. If your pain doesn't subside, consult with your therapist about what other things might be causing your pain.
3. Contact Kintsugi Physical Therapy & Wellness for an appointment. We will guide you so you can get back to the activities you love.

**KintsugiPT.com**

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