

Life Begins With a Breath®
The Chinese Medicine Guide to Health
Courtesy of the Goodman Wellness Center

Neck Pain!

Neck pain is one of the most common complaints as we age.

What causes neck pain?

Neck pain has many causes, but some of the most common are muscle inflammation, bone spurs, disc bulging or disc herniation, and vertebrae misalignment.

What creates muscle inflammation?

Muscle inflammation can be caused by trauma (an external injury) like falling down or a car accident. Repetitive motion is another possible cause, like tilting your head while talking on the phone, or slouching at a

computer. Tension resulting from stress is the most common cause.

How does stress cause muscle inflammation?

Think about when you get angry and your shoulders rise up to your ears. That's where they are all day long when you are stressed out.

What is a bone spur?

A bone spur is an outgrowth of the normal bone. Think of rubbing your hand over a smooth piece of wood and you hit a splinter. *OUCH!* That sensation is similar to what a bone spur does to the tissue within the body. Ouch again!

What is a disc bulge or disc herniation?

A disc is the cream filling of an Oreo cookie. When you push down to hard on one side or the other of the cookie the cream filling starts to bulge out the other side (bulging disc). If the filling breaks off and hits the floor (darn it!), then it is herniated (herniated disc). Both of those cases may impede a nerve, creating numbness and tingling down the arm and pain. The cause again is repetitive motion, trauma, or chronic muscle inflammation.

Treatments for Neck Pain

What you can do?

1. Stretch and move the head and neck slowly taking deep breaths in each position.
2. Breathe! Breathing in itself is relaxing and therefore helps to reduce stress. Breathing itself moves the muscles around the neck, loosening them up.
3. Rub the area that is painful and follow it until you find the origin, the rub it some more until the pain diminishes (five minutes).

What else can be done?

Acupuncture is an excellent method in treating neck pain.

Acupuncture reduces inflammation and resolves stress, taking care of two problems at once.

What if I have a bone spur or a herniated disc?

Both of those conditions require x-rays or an MRI to make a proper diagnose. You would need to see an orthopedic specialist. After a diagnosis is given the orthopedist may recommend anti-inflammatory medication, steroids, physical therapy, or surgery. Alternatives or compliments to those choices are **acupuncture, massage, herbal therapy, cupping, exercise, and/or chiropractic care.**

I recommend prevention early because as we age, like an old door hinge, we need a little extra outside lubrication if we do not want to squeak.

Prevention of Neck Pain

1. Start becoming aware of your body. You need to pay attention to when your shoulders are becoming stiff. When they do, relax them and breathe. Similarly, when you tilt the head in one direction for long periods, tilt the head in the opposite direction the same amount of time to balance the muscles out.
2. Proper nutrition and rest
3. Daily stretching routines in the morning and at night
4. Headsets for the telephone
5. Bimonthly massages
6. Bimonthly acupuncture care to reduce inflammation

If you have neck pain or know anyone suffering from neck pain, call Steven Goodman at 949-460-9378

Energy Concoctions You Can Try at Home

Energy Today

If you do not have time to make a full breakfast and you have a trying day coming up try this breakfast smoothie.

6 ounces apples
1 banana, cut into chunks
2 fresh Kiwis peeled and quartered
½ cup silken tofu
1 teaspoon green food blend
1 dropper astragalus
1 dropper ginseng
1 dropper yerba mate'

Place ingredients in a blender and whip until smooth. Pour and drink

The droppers or alcohol extracts of the individual herbs can be purchased at Mother's Market, Henry's, Whole Foods or any health food store.

Weekday Workout

Again if you have no time to prepare a proper breakfast here is a drink that will help you prior to your workout.

8 ounces orange juice
1 ounce fresh wheat grass or green food blend
1 teaspoon protein powder
1 dropper Siberian ginseng
1 dropper Chinese ginseng

Blend all of the ingredients together and serve immediately.

These recipes are from "Elixer's Tonics and Teas"

By Jeff Stein and Edgar Veytia

Consult your physician if you are on any medication before preparing and trying these drinks.