



Appalachian Physical Therapy, Inc.

*"Always Getting Better."*

# NEWSLETTER

**AUGUST 2023**

## **MYSTERIES OF THE HEAD & NECK**



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## MYSTERIES OF THE HEAD AND NECK

Many years ago, I remember being taught in physical therapy school the reasons or primary problems one experiences in the head and neck area. Having just graduated, I felt that I was "it" and knew the latest and the greatest. I could not have been further from the truth and reality. Several reasons for this disconnect are number one, academia is usually behind at least 15 years from what's happening in the real world and sometimes a lot more, and number two, most of the time professional students are taught how to pass their exam at the end of their course of school work, which leans heavily on research that is way out of date.

Unfortunately, both of these are true. New professionals practicing in the field rely heavily on what they've been taught and are struggling to really get to the root of the problems they are faced with daily. There are two ways this can play out and one way is to continue to depend on what they've been taught, and the second way is to collaborate with those who have experience and actually get good results. Unfortunately, in this process, there are lots of people that come under your care that continue to have re-occurrence of their symptoms as the root of the problem was not treated. Our healthcare system today really is not about returning someone back to health. It's about treating symptoms and it should be called sick care. "Health care, insurance policies" usually reimburse people very little for preventative care although there are a few out there that will cover a minor amount.

Going back to the original subject matter, it really is not difficult to treat head and neck problems if you understand the referral patterns and symptom knowledge of the systems. One such area that is always challenging involves people who have headaches and or dizziness and giddiness. You see, there are so many things that can cause dizziness, as well as giddiness which we will define as being off-balance or unsteady on your feet. It usually does not involve a spinning report from the patient. A big clue in regards to this is the headache portion of a person's complaint. There are many muscles

in the head and neck that can cause headaches. Primarily there are just a couple that can cause headaches along with dizziness or giddiness. These involve the sternocleidomastoid as well as the upper trapezius muscles. It should be noted that the upper trapezius gets its innervation or nerve supply from all of the dorsal rami or nerves that come off the back of the spinal cord from the neck all the way down to the top of the lumbar spine. Both the sternocleidomastoid as well as the trapezius are also innervated from nerves within the brain that exit before the spinal cord called cranial nerves.

Without a doubt, headaches can be caused by neurological problems within the head, such as tumors or cysts. Infections can also cause headaches as well as inner ear and sinus problems. There are specific symptoms that should allow a good practitioner to rule these main problems out. Most of the time once the initial evaluation is performed, patients are left still with headaches and or dizziness. Dizziness and giddiness are usually treated with medication, and/or injections, which tend to treat symptoms instead of the cause of the problem. Typically we will see folks with headaches as well as face and neck pain that have had problems that come and go even though they are taking medication and or injections. It's not unusual for us to see folks who have had several steroid or spinal injections that they get three times a year or more. They may even have experienced nerve ablation with high-frequency radio waves, and unfortunately, get disc and cervical surgeries.

I'm not going to say these surgeries and involvement are not needed sometimes, however, most of the time people who have been treated with conservative care have experienced treatment by younger professionals right out of school that have followed what they've been taught without having a great deal of experience, and thus, are in the "system". As I stated earlier, the system is broken. We here at Appalachian Physical Therapy work very hard to determine the causative factor and treat to extinguish head and neck pain, which causes headaches, dizziness and giddiness. Again, it should

not be hard to rule out medical problems when evaluated by an experienced medical practitioner. Once a patient is cleared of medical problems, they should be referred to a physical therapist to determine and treat the cause of their dysfunction, not for treatment of the symptoms.

We know from experience and lots of cutting-edge research the primary causes of head and neck pain along with dizziness and giddiness. Usually, these problems can be taken care of pretty quickly, however, it depends on the patient's history. If their medical history shows lots of involvement with medications and injections, it can be more involved from both a physical standpoint and patient belief standpoint. You see, what's happening is they have been in the system for a long time and have always relied on their problems being taken care of by a broken "health care" system. They realize after a period of time, this does not treat the problem, and they're looking for other avenues of help. It certainly can be done but as I stated earlier, it is more involved. One of the best ways to treat any type of problem is to inform and teach people how to become better advocates for their own care. Usually every month at Appalachian Physical Therapy, we have specific seminars to do just that, inform and teach attendees what we experience and see on the front lines of patient care every day. It just so happens that during the month of August, we will have a head and neck seminar to cover items discussed in this article.

Appalachian Physical Therapy is committed to improving overall "health care" and with your help, will make a difference. Education is and should be primary to enable a person to be a better advocate for themselves, family members and friends. Thanks for supporting us over the years and know we continue to invest in education and cutting edge technology enabling us to always get better which helps you get better as well. Give us a call should you have questions or are experiencing problems with your head/neck such as headaches, dizziness or giddiness. We have your back as well as your head and neck!





# IMPROVE YOUR NUTRITION WITH SEASONAL SUPERFOODS

Every season brings a new selection of nourishing, whole foods. Though supermarkets typically have a vast selection of produce year round, there are some serious benefits to eating foods that are in season. To start, food that's in season just tastes better– it's fully ripened and harvested at the perfect time– and you can taste the difference. Eating seasonal food is also better for the environment and can save you money!

**Check out this list of superfoods for every season:**

## FALL

- Sweet potatoes and pumpkin: These superfoods boast huge amounts of vitamin A– and excellent flavor too! Sweet potatoes specifically are rich in potassium, calcium, vitamin C, and antioxidants.
- Cruciferous vegetables: Vegetables in this category include turnips, collards, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, cabbage, and broccoli.
- Pomegranates: These fruits are rich in antioxidants and can actually boost brain function! Impressive, right?

## WINTER

- Kiwi: These fruits are full of nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. In fact, there is more vitamin C in a kiwi than in an orange!
- Pears: There are many different types of pears, each with their own season, though the majority are available throughout the winter. Pears are high in vitamin C, antioxidants, and fiber.
- Rutabaga: These are a bigger, more nutritious relative of turnips that are in season from October to March. This vegetable is high in Vitamin C, Potassium, and fiber.

## SPRING

- Artichokes: This superfood is high in vitamin C, vitamin K, Folate, magnesium, potassium, and fiber.
- Asparagus: Though asparagus is available all year long, it peaks during the spring months. Asparagus is rich in sulfur and folic acid.
- Strawberries: These fruits supply calcium, potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, folate, fiber, and vitamins A and C.

## SUMMER

- Peaches: This popular fruit contains a variety of nutrients, including vitamins A, C, E, and K, as well as potassium, beta-carotene, and B vitamins. These nutrients can improve skin, heart, and eye health.
- Cucumbers: Cucumber's high water content helps add some extra hydration to your day. They are also anti-inflammatory and contain a hefty amount of vitamin K.
- Raspberries: Raspberries have a high manganese, folic acid, dietary fiber, vitamin C, and antioxidant content. A serving of this fruit can help with eye health, infection prevention, feminine health regulation, and weight loss.



## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: GEORGIA MARLOW

Our Pinehurst artist of the month is Georgia Marlow. Georgia Marlowe grew up with the love of all things art. As life went on there was little time for her to focus on her art. Now retired she has total focus on what she loves the most, playing in paint and making art.

***We are always searching for artists in the Moore county/Pinehurst area that want to display their artwork. Contact our Pinehurst office for information.***



BROADWAY  
540.305.3121

HARRISONBURG  
540.302.5272

PINEHURST  
910.586.3905

STRASBURG  
540.274.5431



# START HEALING AT OUR HEAD & NECK WORKSHOPS



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HEAD & NECK  
WORKSHOP

HARRISONBURG



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WORKSHOP

STRASBURG



HEAD & NECK  
WORKSHOP

PINEHURST



FREE  
SCREENING

## GET BACK TO NORMAL WITHOUT MEDICATIONS, INJECTIONS & SURGERY...

Use the camera app on your smartphone to see the next workshop at the location nearest you. You may also call our office numbers listed on the front page of this newsletter.

## UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

### STRASBURG:

- Head & Neck Workshop

### HARRISONBURG:

- Head & Neck Workshop

### BROADWAY:

- Head & Neck Workshop

### PINEHURST:

- August FREE Screenings

## DON'T GET LEFT BEHIND! FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

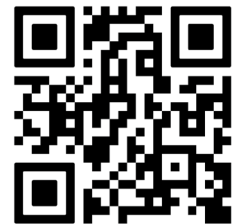
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# HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANIES DO NOT CARE ABOUT YOU.

Yeah, I know that is a pretty bold statement. Just bear with me and you will at least understand where I am coming from on this issue. First of all, we do not have a health care system in this country. Our medical system does not typically know how to return a person to a state of wellness. It is more of a "sick care" system that is focused on treating symptoms, not the cause of the problem. Sure, for things needing meds for infections, etc., it is great. No doubt this is where meds rule. Unfortunately, that is only a small portion of the spectrum.

Take for instance headaches. Lots of things can cause this problem so folks will have MRIs, CT scans and the like. Definitely we want to rule out brain tumors and cysts, however, there are many ways to determine if these tests are truly needed before firing off a list of tests that by far, usually come back with unremarkable results. Medical providers have lost their way and have joined large corporations that encourage the use of these tests as they reap the financial rewards from this behavior. There are so many research articles that speak to this but we continue to see this happen time and time again. I am sure I will catch a lot of flak from this article but the truth speaks for itself. I will say unless it is a medical emergency, most insurance companies will not pay for an MRI or further testing until a person has had conservative care. That is a good thing.

Now to the title of this article. Health insurance companies are not doing this because they have your best interest at heart. They are doing it because this practice saves them money. Yep, that's right. Their bottom line improves and it makes their shareholders happy when they are paid higher dividends. Practitioners that treat with conservative care are paid less than 4% of the amount spent on healthcare a year while 75% is spent on expensive tests as well as medications, injections and surgery. Again, when these are needed, they are certainly the "cure," however, in the US, more money is spent on these practices than anywhere else in the entire world. Health insurance companies reward poor healthcare practices such as total joint replacement instead of preventing the problem in the first place. Research shows by 2025, just two years away, the average age of a total knee replacement in the USA will be 50 years of age. That, my friend, is totally ridiculous!

There is no healthcare insurance company that is leading the way to help solve this problem. Yes, you may get companies stating they will pay for a well-care visit once a year and even pay for a membership at a gym or fitness center. This is small bananas compared to just one MRI or CT that is ordered frequently as stated earlier. I will give you some more examples. In today's health care system, we have enrollment periods that happen typically yearly from November through the middle of January. There are other special times this can occur with life-changing events such as getting married, having a baby or moving but for most folks, this occurs from November through the middle of January. You cannot change your health care insurance otherwise. It is during this period folks are bombarded with ads stating that insurance companies can save you money with their policies, all you have to do is sign up. NOT TRUE. They will review your current meds and history and voila, offer you a specific policy just for you that gives you the same coverage at a reduced price. Hogwash! Ain't happening. They had to cut benefits somewhere and usually it is with conservative care. Patients usually find out the hard way when it comes to needing PT, OT or speech therapy that these services are barely covered at a reduced price that most providers cannot conceivably break even if they participate with your new policy.

You were told you can choose your provider and that is true. The only problem is your chosen provider has to stay in business and must participate with insurance companies that at least pay enough so they can break even. The playing field has always been uneven in the medical field as large corporations

are usually "not for profit" and do not have to pay taxes on their income. So hospitals will usually see folks with these type of policies as they basically receive 50% more reimbursement for providing care. Unfortunately, this is exactly where folks will most likely see the maximal number of patients spending less time and being paid more for less direct care. It is out of control. Now I know of several large corporations across the country that do a fair job of seeing patients but they are very focused on their bottom line instead of the patients that walk in the door. It can be done in a fairly good way but it is a rarity for sure.

If insurance companies truly cared about you, they would thoroughly explain the benefit package they are offering. They would reward best care practices and not reimburse for items that are and have clearly been proven through studies to be costly and ineffective. We find the vast majority of folks coming into our care have no idea what their health care policy covers and some have no idea who their coverage is with. Again, insurance companies purposefully sow confusion to sell you a cheaper product so they can reap the benefits. Interested in you? Not at all. Interested in your money? Absolutely.

So what is one to do? Become educated and ask questions. Know what is out there in the market regarding health care. It can be pretty brutal when you are faced with the reality of what you have paid for not meeting your needs in a crucial moment. We here at Appalachian Physical Therapy have chosen to stay the course providing the best care available and there is a cost involved with that care. We are here to educate as well as inform you of the services we feel you need and will do all we can to help you in your present or future need. Try us and you will see we are always getting better and when we get better, so do you!



## CHALLENGE YOUR MIND

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## LOYALTY PROGRAM



**WIN A \$25  
AMAZON GIFT  
CARD!**

Refer a friend this month and receive a **FREE \$25 Amazon gift card!** Make sure they mention your name during the evaluation visit to receive your prize!



## OUR PATIENTS ARE SEEING AWESOME RESULTS



"I was sent to Appalachian PT for pain in my neck. My physical therapist was Bryan and he was able to not only relieve the pain in my neck, but also restore total movement. **The entire staff was very friendly and helpful.** If someone needs physical therapy, they should definitely come to Appalachian PT." — **N. Smith**



"I really enjoyed my time here at Appalachian Physical Therapy. **I came in with vertigo problems and Dr. Colleen was able to get to the root of it by working on the fascia to relieve the pulling and tightness on the left and right side of my neck.** All of the staff members are very friendly and I also enjoyed the presence of Colleen's dog, Autumn." — **C. Constantin**



"**I had no idea coming into this that jaw pain could be fixed with physical therapy.** I came into this not always being able to simply chew food without pain. After a few weeks of appointments with Dr. Brewster I can now open and close my mouth without pain, chew without pain, and even talk without pain. This whole office is filled with very nice and enjoyable people. They made coming here something to look forward to!" — **L. Peer**



"When I started at Appalachian Physical Therapy, I had pain in my neck which at times would cause my arm to go completely numb during the night. **During the therapy process, the pain became less and the numbness and tingling in my arm and hand subsided.** I have resumed life pain free! My therapist, Linden, provided professional care in a fun manner. I would recommend Appalachian to anyone." — **S. Rodgers**

**SUBMIT YOUR SUCCESS STORY NOW AND  
BE FEATURED NEXT MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

