



# Health & Fitness

The Magazine About Your Health and Caring for Your Body

Issue 6

## PERSONAL MESSAGE

# Women's Health

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These days there are many health issues that women face and having an understanding of how these issues can affect their health is important in order to know how best to deal with them.

Physical Therapy is being discovered by women world wide to help treat and prevent many of the problems that develop as they grow older. In this newsletter we will discuss a wide array of topics affecting women and what Physical Therapy can do to help bring back normalcy and prevent further injury and illness.

**Pre and Post Pregnancy Care** is a very important part of becoming a mother. Many women suffer from lower and upper back pain, cervical pain, headaches and muscle spasms during and after pregnancy which can make a normally joyous time of life awkward to bear. Your Physical Therapist can create an easy and effective program to help alleviate and prevent these and many other symptoms that come with being pregnant.

**Incontinence** occurs when the bladder does not store urine appropriately and/or does not empty completely. Incontinence occurs in both men and women and is now being recognized as a real problem. Your Physical Therapist can help you control your bladder and reduce the "got to go" moments.

**Pelvic Pain** is experienced by many women, and is generally felt as a pressure or ache localized in or around the genitalia and anus areas, lower

abdomen or occasionally the back and thighs. Pelvic Pain may have many causes, stress and infection being among them. Your Physical Therapist can help you find the cause of the pain and reduce it by handling it accordingly.

**Back Pain** is very common in both sexes and is caused by many different factors. A few being: bad posture, unsupportive shoes, standing or sitting incorrectly for long amounts of time and improper lifting techniques. Your Physical Therapist can help you devise an exercise plan to reduce pain and can educate you on good posture and lifting techniques to prevent further injury to the back.

**Osteoporosis and Osteopenia** is a decline in bone mass and appears in about 50% of women in their 50s, 66% of women in their 60s, 86% of women in their 70s, and 93% of women over eighty. This loss of bone mass makes one more susceptible to broken bones and fractures. Your Physical Therapist can help you gain back some of your mobility and balance to help prevent falls and breaks. Your PT will teach you the correct exercises to build back your strength, and to increase flexibility and range of motion.



Staff, NW Sports Physical Therapy, Inc.



**Your Physical Therapist has been trained in the latest massage, wrapping procedures and compression techniques to help provide relief from the pain caused by Lymphedema.**

## About Lymphedema

**Lymphedema** is the swelling that occasionally develops in a limb or region of the body following damage to the lymph vessel system. Damage can occur from cancer treatment, surgery or traumatic injury. Impairment of the lymphatic system allows lymph fluid to accumulate in the tissues, which may impair motion, reduce function and can provide a site

for bacterial growth and infection. Your Physical Therapist has been trained in the latest massage, wrapping procedures and compression techniques to help provide relief from the pain caused by Lymphedema.

**Primary Lymphedema** can occur in any of the four limbs and other parts of the body throughout your life time. It may be present at birth or develop during puberty or adulthood. The cause of Primary Lymphedema is unknown but may be associated with other vascular anomalies.

**Secondary Lymphedema** (or Acquired Lymphedema) develops as a result of infection, trauma, surgery and radiation therapy. The occurrences of Lymphedema following breast cancer therapies are estimated from 10% to 35% of survivors. Many other surgeries for removing cancerous lymph nodes also leave patients in serious risk of developing Secondary Lymphedema.

### Reasons to see your Physical Therapist:

- Persistent swelling
  - Tightness of clothes in one specific area
  - Watch, ring or bracelet tightness
  - Decreased flexibility of the hands, wrists, ankles and feet
  - Puffy skin, as if your skin is too tight
- Lymphedema is a chronic condition like Diabetes or Arthritis. While there is no known cure there are many techniques that Physical Therapists are being trained in.

**Manual Lymph Drainage** is accomplished with massage techniques which gently encourage movement of the lymph in the afflicted area. Your Physical Therapist will start with a light massage technique that is said to be as gentle as a "butterfly kiss", then will work with increasing strength in the general area of the Lymphedema starting the lymph moving and providing relief from the pain associated with Lymphedema.

**Compression Methods** are used to help reduce the swelling, and assist in natural lymph drainage.

- Your Physical Therapist will use short bandages to wrap the swollen areas and to reduce the swelling and pain.
- After treatments, compression garments should be worn to help maintain the gains made during treatments.

# Article

## Urinary Incontinence

Urinary incontinence is the involuntary loss of urine from the bladder or urethra. It can affect men and women of all ages, although it is predominately seen in women, approximately 2/3 of cases. There are various types of incontinence including stress and urge incontinence. Stress incontinence is the loss of urine under “stressful” situations such as laughing, coughing, sneezing, running, etc. It is caused by weakness in the pelvic floor muscles and decreased urethral resistance. Urge incontinence or overactive bladder, is the loss of urine associated with a sudden and strong urge to void. This is caused by bladder over activity and has various causes.

Urinary incontinence is not a condition that is relegated just to older women. 28% of female athletes report urine loss while participating in sports and 1/3 of female soldiers have reported urine loss during physical training. Men can also suffer from urinary incontinence due to pelvic floor weakness. Men may also deal with urinary retention due to an enlarged prostate or incontinence during prostate cancer treatments.

Despite the cause of your urinary incontinence symptoms, there are different treatment approaches to target your problem. Physical therapy can assist with retraining voiding schedules, increase bladder health, regain pelvic floor strength and decrease inappropriate bladder urges and leakage.

## Tips and Tricks

### FOR A HEALTHY BLADDER



- Void 5-7 times in a 24 hour period (about every 2-4 hours)
- Make sure to take in 32-64 ounces of fluid per day
- 2/3 of your fluid intake should be water
- No nighttime voiding if under the age of 65
- Make sure you sit on the toilet and don't strain to urinate
- Avoid constipation



# FAQ

## **If I drink less water, won't this help decrease my leakage?**

No, actually drinking less water can make your incontinence symptoms worse. One of the causes of urinary incontinence can actually be dehydration as it irritates the bladder wall and this can precipitate incontinence. You want to make sure that you are taking in plenty of fluids throughout the day with at least 2/3 of your intake being water.

## **I feel like I go to the bathroom all the time. Is this normal?**

No, this is not normal but there are things we can do to help you and your bladder. A person under the age of 65 should be voiding 5-7 times in a 24 hour period without night time trips to the bathroom. This equates to voiding every 2-4 hours. If you are making stops more frequently, there are methods to "retrain" your bladder to be healthier.

## **I am only 35 years old; I am way too young to have incontinence. What causes this?**

There are many different reasons/causes for urinary incontinence. As a young woman, one of the risk factors for urinary incontinence is childbirth. Women who have had one vaginal delivery are 2.5 times more likely to suffer from urinary incontinence symptoms versus women who have not had children. It is important to follow up with your doctor if you are suffering from incontinence, because there are techniques to help control your symptoms.

## **I am 34 weeks pregnant and my back is really bothering me, is it too late for physical therapy?**

It is never too late to seek treatment for pregnancy related pain or discomfort. There are various tools we can use as therapists to assist in symptom control including heat and ice; manual techniques and massage and bracing/bracing if needed. We can also be helpful in assisting in labor and delivery education. Don't wait any longer!

## **Reasons to ask your Physical Therapist about Incontinence**

### **Take this simple test...**

Over 12 million Americans suffer from Incontinence and less than half seek treatment. Your Physical Therapist can easily help you to develop the strength necessary to regain control of your bladder.

### **Results:**

If you have answered yes to any of these questions you should ask your Physical Therapist what you can do to take back control of your bladder.

YES	NO	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you feel as if you can never fully empty your bladder?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you use the bathroom more than 8 times per day?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you leak when you cough or sneeze?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you leak before you are even aware of the need to go?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you spend a long time on the toilet only to produce a small amount or drips of urine?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have frequent bladder infections?



## Featured Therapist

### Jill Ghent



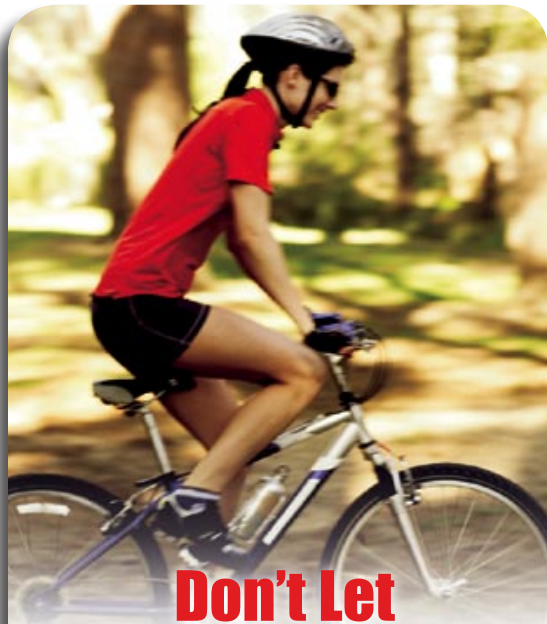
Jill has been a physical therapist for 4 1/2 years, practicing orthopedics and specializing in women's health physical therapy. She has been a part of NW Women's Physical Therapy since September of 2004. She is also a nationally certified athletic trainer which allows her to work with athletes of all ages. Jill is a graduate of University of Puget Sound with a Bachelor's of Science in physical education and a Doctorate in Physical Therapy.

Jill enjoys the field of women's health, allowing her to work with women of all ages and varying conditions. Her coursework includes pelvic floor strengthening, urinary incontinence treatment, management of the pregnant client, pelvic pain and sacroiliac joint dysfunction. She has also been involved with community education seminars on fitness and exercise guidelines, bladder education and bladder health. When Jill is not working, she enjoys spending time with her husband Bob and chasing around their 15 month old son Owen. She has also taken up running and enjoys scrapbooking.



## What's happening at our family of clinics....

- Jill Ghent, Jill Martin, Troy and Tara Lindstrom, Craig Armstrong and Gretchen Hull all represented NW Sports Physical Therapy, Inc. at the 3rd annual Gig Harbor Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning. Those brave enough to endure the "not so perfect" weather conditions were able to partake in the days eating festivities with a little less guilt. And to Craig, who endured a little more calorie burning activity than the rest, ran the 10k but we don't know how he did since no one stayed around to find out!
- NW Women's Physical Therapy is proud to announce their very own Anna Tensmeyer participated in the November 26th Seattle Marathon and finished with a time of 3:31:15. Anna's time placed her 23 overall, and 4th in her division! Anna's incredible time has qualified her for the Boston Marathon. Way to go Anna!
- Dave Andrews is traveling to Tampa, Florida to work as a personal athletic trainer for a world renowned tennis player. He will be working for two weeks doing individual injury treatment and rehabilitation as this player prepares for the upcoming USTA season. We'll keep you updated on Dave's suntan.
- Lisa Atkinson, physical therapist at NW Women's Physical Therapy, gave birth to her second little boy on October 9th. Tyler Atkinson and mom are doing just fine.
- NW Sports Physical Therapy staff has seen two monumental birthdays this last month, Troy Lindstrom turned 30 and Craig Armstrong turned 40! Happy Birthday to both!



# Don't Let Incontinence Ruin Your Lifestyle!

Come and Visit Us for a **FREE CONSULTATION**

Find out if Physical Therapy can help improve your quality of life.

**(253) 851-7277**



## NW SPORTS

PHYSICAL THERAPY, INC.

Caring about *you* is our business at **NW Sports Physical Therapy, Inc.** Our Tacoma and Gig Harbor clinics provide physical therapy for a wide variety of conditions. We use a number of methods to decrease your pain, improve your mobility and make you stronger, healthier and happier.

The feeling you get here is one of caring, helpful staff in a friendly environment, assisting you in your desire to become more active or return to work or play.

NW Sports Physical Therapy, Inc. also has two other clinics which focus on

specific areas of concern. First, **NW Hand Therapy** specializes in the treatment of hand, wrist, elbow and shoulder problems. We have three occupational therapists who are also Certified Hand Specialists to serve your needs.

Second is our newest specialty area, **NW Women's Physical Therapy.** This clinic is dedicated exclusively to women's health and wellness. We have the ability to care for issues specific to women, in a warm, friendly environment. Our experienced therapists treat issues such as bladder and bowel incontinence, osteoporosis, pelvic floor pain and fibromyalgia.

### WE CARE ABOUT YOU!

Call us today for a **FREE** consultation at

NW Sports Physical Therapy, Inc

Gig Harbor (253) 851-7472

Tacoma (253) 428-8292

NW Hand Therapy

Gig Harbor (253) 851-7472

Tacoma (253) 428-8292

NW Women's Physical Therapy

(253) 851-7277

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## Women's Health

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