

**THE PHYSICAL  
THERAPY INSTITUTE**<sup>SM</sup>  
ORTHOPEDICS AND SPORTS MEDICINE

# NEWSLETTER

[WWW.PHYSICALTHERAPYINSTITUTE.COM](http://WWW.PHYSICALTHERAPYINSTITUTE.COM)



## HOW PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN HELP YOUR CLUSTER HEADACHES

Do you wake up at night with excruciating headaches? Do you have pain behind one eye that seems to intensify quickly? You may be experiencing a cluster headache. At The Physical Therapy Institute, our therapist will help you figure out the source of your headaches and, more importantly, how to find relief from them.

Cluster headaches are a specific type of chronic headache. They are often short-lived but intense headaches that occur every day for weeks. Most cluster attacks occur at night; however, they can occur at any point, sometimes multiple times throughout the day. They get their name because they appear in patterns or “clusters” at the same time every year, such as in the spring or fall.

If you’ve been living with nagging headaches, you will benefit from a consultation with one of our experienced physical therapists. Contact The Physical Therapy Institute today to schedule a and let us help you figure out precisely what type of headache is plaguing you. We’ll help you learn how to resolve it once and for all!



# WHAT CAUSES A CLUSTER HEADACHE?

Any pain that occurs within the head can be referred to as a headache. Most headaches will resolve independently without medical intervention; however, severe or recurrent headaches that interfere with one's quality of life should most certainly be evaluated further.

The challenge lies in identifying which type of headache you're experiencing and then devising a treatment plan accordingly. Cluster headaches, which occur in cyclical patterns or cluster periods, are one of the most painful types of headaches. A cluster headache typically wakes a person up in the middle of the night with intense pain in or around one eye on one side of their head.

**You do not need a doctor's prescription to seek physical therapy in the state of Pennsylvania you have direct access to physical therapy.**



While some headaches have specific triggers, such as hormonal changes, stress, or tension, cluster headaches typically do not. The most common factor associated with cluster headaches are:

- **Age** - Most people who develop cluster headaches are between 20-50 years old.
- **Gender** - Males are more likely to develop cluster headaches than females.
- **Smoking** - A large number of people who experience cluster headaches are smokers.
- **Alcohol** - Alcohol use can aggravate or even trigger a cluster attack.
- **Family history** - Those who have family members with cluster headaches are more likely to develop them themselves.

### **How physical therapy can relieve cluster headaches**

Physical therapy isn't typically someone's first thought when they have a headache. Most of the time, the typical reaction is to take some form of pain-relieving medication. If you suffer from cluster headaches, pain relief drugs will not provide you with the same long-term relief as physical therapy.

Physical therapy can be a very effective remedy for cluster headaches. It is a safe and effective option for decreasing their frequency, pain intensity levels, and duration.



The first step of physical therapy is determining the underlying cause. Our therapist will conduct a comprehensive evaluation to determine the type of headache you have.

Our physical therapists are experienced in treating most musculoskeletal problems, including headaches and other disorders related to the condition. We will use targeted manual therapy, postural education, and specific stretches to alleviate your pain.

Often recommendations to change positions from standing to sitting to reclining can provide relief to calm the pain down and allow you to regain your ability to function at home.

In addition to the therapeutic recommendations, some lifestyle changes can minimize how often you experience cluster headaches. Your physical therapist may suggest lifestyle changes including:

- Increasing exercise and physical activity (but avoid exercising in hot weather)
- Cutting out alcohol and/or cigarettes
- Avoiding specific medications which can cause blood vessels to dilate and trigger cluster headaches
- Stress relief techniques, as well as learning how to avoid stressful situations that may trigger your headaches
- Creating a consistent sleep schedule
- Implementing a more nutritious diet

We can help get to the root of your problem and figure out what factors are causing your cluster headaches so we can treat them accordingly.

## **Call to schedule an appointment**

If you have been dealing with persistent, ongoing headaches that you believe may be cluster headaches, don't hesitate to contact our office today.

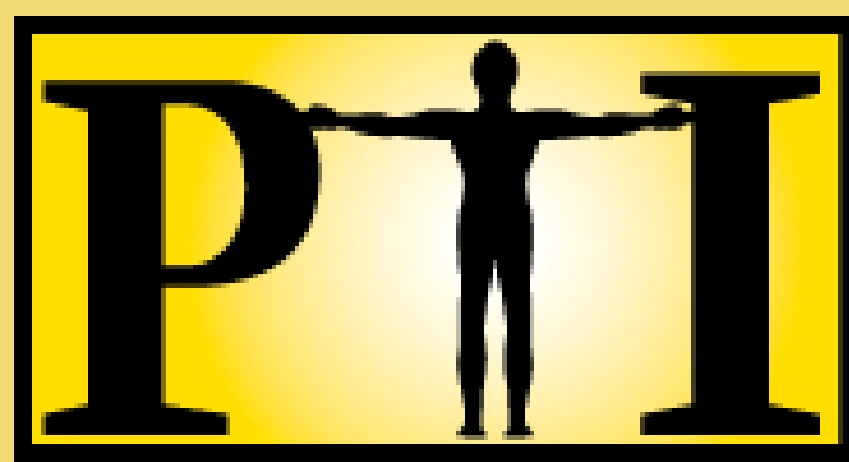
At The Physical Therapy Institute, we will help you figure out the cause of your headaches and provide an effective, safe and natural treatment plan for eliminating the pain!

Sources: [https://www.physio-pedia.com/Cluster\\_Headaches](https://www.physio-pedia.com/Cluster_Headaches)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6468612/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8222635/>

# STAFF FEATURE



**ANTHONY POZZUTO, DPT, MS, LAT**  
**ROBINSON CLINIC**

Anthony Pozzuto DPT, MS, LAT started his journey at the University of Akron where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in athletic training. He was the head athletic trainer at a secondary school where he provided treatment and rehabilitation to various sports teams. Anthony advanced his education by earning a master's degree in exercise physiology and then a doctorate in physical therapy at Youngstown State University. His professional interest is in sports rehabilitation and treating sport-specific injuries. When he is not in the clinic he enjoys working out, snowboarding, and quality time with friends and family.



# MINDFULNESS EXERCISES

Do you find yourself becoming overwhelmed easily in your daily life? Do you constantly feel stressed? If so, you may benefit from practicing mindfulness.

Mindfulness originated from ancient eastern and Buddhist philosophy and dates back around 2500 years. Mindfulness is the process of bringing one's attention to the present moment and observing one's thoughts and feelings without judging them. It can be applied to anything from eating, walking, or washing dishes to formal meditation practices.

Mindfulness has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety levels, improve relationships with others, and help individuals lead healthier lives! The best part of mindfulness is that anyone can begin implementing these practices in their daily lives without any cost or expensive resources.

If you're looking for ways to reduce stress and promote wellbeing— check out the mindfulness exercises below.

**1. The full body scan.** Begin this exercise by lying on your back with your palms facing up and your feet falling slightly apart. Start to bring awareness to your breath, noticing each inhale and exhale. Try not to change the way you're breathing; instead, simply practice observing your existing breathing pattern. Next, focus on how your feet feel, noticing whether you observe a sensation of heaviness or lightness. Slowly move your attention up throughout your entire body to complete a full-body scan.

**2. The 5 senses test.** Another way to check in with your body is to perform this 5 senses exercise. Begin by determining 5 things you can see. Then move to 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things



you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste. Many people find this activity grounding and report that it can help soothe panic and anxiety.

**3. The 3-minute breathing space.** If you are new to meditation, this is the perfect activity for you. It is a simple 3-minute exercise designed to help those with busy lives and minds. During the first minute of this meditation, focus on answering the question, “How am I doing right now?”

For the second minute, shift your focus to your breath, noticing each inhale and exhale. The last minute should be spent scanning up and down your body, observing how your breath affects your entire body. You can place a hand on your stomach or chest to help you concentrate on how your body moves.



# FREE IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS

[www.physicaltherapyinstitute.com/workshops/](http://www.physicaltherapyinstitute.com/workshops/)

The Physical Therapy Institute hosts FREE workshops that focus on a specific type of pain or condition at select PTI locations. These hour-long workshops are hosted by the Physical Therapist at the clinic, and focus on getting you back to normal naturally, without the use of medications, injections or surgeries. To register for the workshops, follow the link above or click below! To learn more about the workshops, please call 724-503-6993 or email [jwatkins@pt-institute.com](mailto:jwatkins@pt-institute.com).

***SIGN UP TODAY FOR OUR  
FREE KNEE, LOW BACK, & SHOULDER  
PAIN WORKSHOPS***



***REGISTER TODAY***



## PATIENT SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT



***“I was able to have full movement in my neck!”***

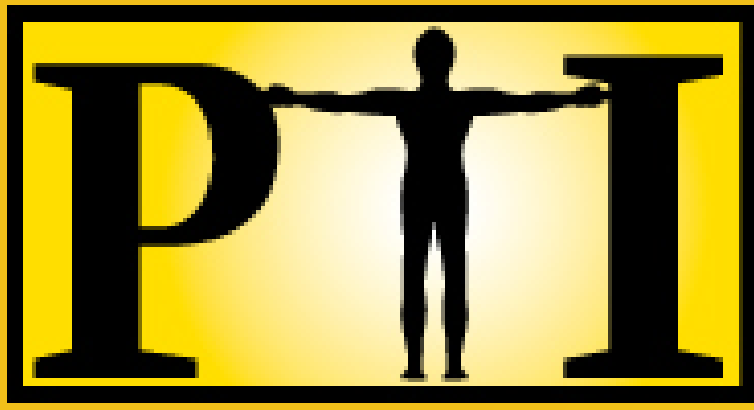
*“I’ve had a wonderful experience here. I was not able to turn my head from left to right to watch for cars while driving. Within two weeks, I was able to have full movement in my neck. It made driving much safer. The pain in my back and upper arms also felt much better. I am so glad they were able to help!”*

**– Karen M.**

**TAKE YOUR HEALTH TO  
THE NEXT LEVEL**

**COME BACK TO PT!**

Are you in pain? Have you sustained an injury?  
**Give us a call at a clinic nearest to you today to schedule an appointment!**



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**724-503-6993**

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**VISIT A CLINIC NEAREST YOU!**

<b>Washington</b>	724.527.4264
<b>Apollo</b>	724.306.6951
<b>Elizabethtown</b>	717.500.3411
<b>Greensburg Ortho &amp; Sports</b>	724.395.7523
<b>Irwin</b>	724.395.7701
<b>White Oak</b>	412.517.7842
<b>Monroeville</b>	412.693.6210
<b>Moon Township</b>	412.725.0193
<b>Mount Lebanon</b>	412.923.0923
<b>Murrysville</b>	724.948.1202
<b>Robinson Physical Therapy</b>	412.866.2764
<b>Derry Clinic</b>	724.948.0901
<b>Greensburg</b>	724.402.5770
<b>Harrison City</b>	724.923.4053
<b>Jeannette</b>	724.558.8009
<b>Lower Burrell</b>	724.558.8013
<b>Mon Valley</b>	724.670.2731
<b>Morningside</b>	412.324.4967
<b>Mount Pleasant</b>	724.481.5595
<b>Penn Hills</b>	412.754.7855
<b>Warrendale</b>	724.948.1672
<b>Burgettstown</b>	724.560.3840
<b>Monaca</b>	724.564.6518



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