

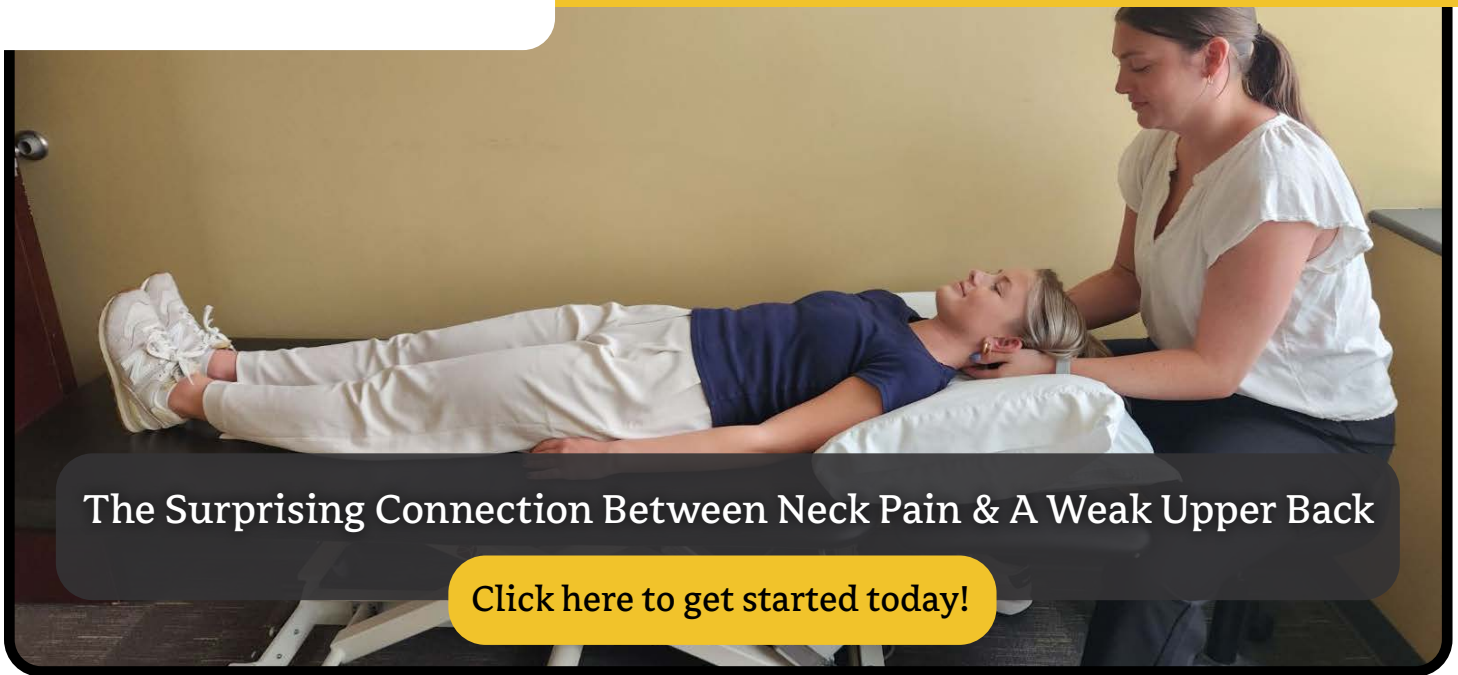


**THE PHYSICAL
THERAPY INSTITUTE**
ORTHOPEDICS AND SPORTS MEDICINE

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NEWSLETTER

Helping You Move Through Life Pain-Free



The Surprising Connection Between Neck Pain & A Weak Upper Back

[Click here to get started today!](#)

Plus, A Tale of Two Patients: One Who Strength-Trained, and One Who Didn't

Do you ever find yourself trying to rub out a sore spot in your neck or find it difficult to turn your head? Neck pain is a common concern that can range from a mild nuisance to a big problem. And while neck pain can have several different causes, one contributing factor often gets overlooked: weakness in the shoulders or upper back.

When we deal with persistent aches and pains, poor muscle strength often turns out to be a significant underlying factor. When a muscle isn't as strong as it should be, other muscles have to step in to compensate, which puts unnecessary strain on them — and makes them more susceptible to overuse injuries. The result? Seemingly random aches and pains that “come out of nowhere.”

If you're struggling with persistent neck pain, there's a chance that the problem is rooted in your shoulders or upper back. Slouching and prolonged sitting weakens those upper back muscles, forcing your neck muscles to work overtime — and leading to pain. Let's look at two case studies from The Physical Therapy Institute files. Both people suffered from neck pain, but only one went through a dedicated strength training program. What happened next?

Ally's Story: No Time for Strength-Training

Ally was a receptionist who spent long days typing on a computer, answering the phone, and doing other clerical work. She started to notice a slight pain in her neck while she was at work. Although she ignored it at first, the pain persisted. She knew she needed to seek help.

Ally made an appointment with us, where we took her through a comprehensive assessment, including several movement and functional screens. We determined that she had strained the soft tissue in her neck due to her sedentary job.

We started Ally's treatment with acute pain management using manual therapy techniques and some gentle mobility stretches, which did help her immediate symptoms. However, we knew it wouldn't be enough to fully resolve her pain, so we suggested she begin a multi-week therapeutic exercise program to restore strength in her upper back and shoulders, helping to reduce the strain on her neck.

Unfortunately, Ally had decided to go back to school, and between work, her classes, and her family, she simply didn't have time for physical therapy. So, while we were able to help Ally in the short term, her pain persisted in the long term, eventually landing her back in our clinic a year later.

Visit us online physicaltherapyinstitute.com or call [724.527.4264](tel:724.527.4264) today!



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Sarah's Story: A Dedicated Strength Training Program

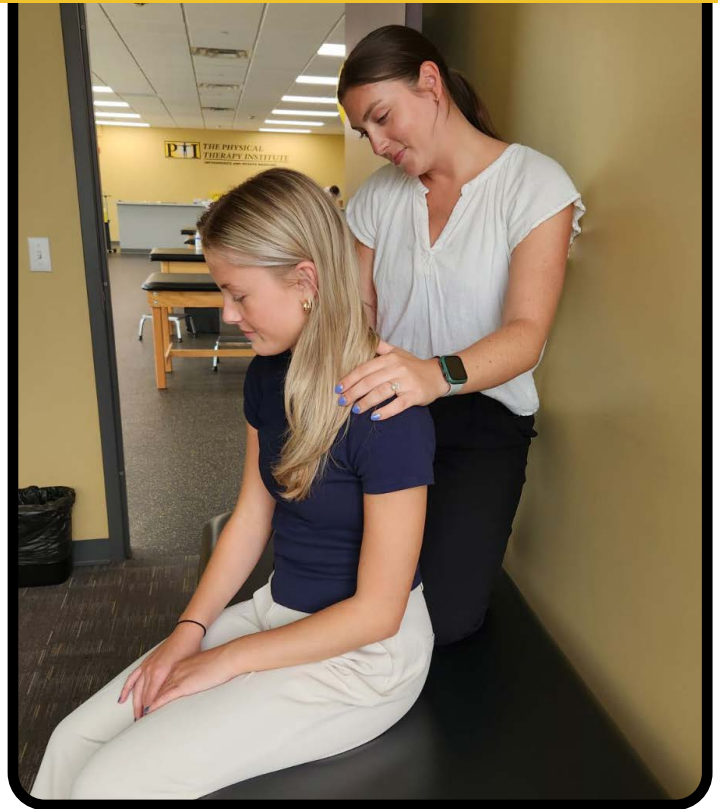
Sarah's situation was very similar to Ally's. She was a marketing assistant who also spent a great deal of time on both her laptop and a mobile phone, and she also experienced a gradual onset of neck pain. And, like Ally, she paid us a visit when it became too much.

We gave her a similar diagnosis: a strained neck muscle brought on by improper posture and prolonged sitting. We also provided her with acute pain relief. The difference? Sarah was able to continue her treatment with a six-week therapeutic exercise program.

We met with Sarah twice weekly to guide her through a custom set of targeted neck, shoulder, and upper back exercises. We started with gentle stretches and mobility work before progressing to resistance training exercises. With the help of some dumbbells and an exercise band, Sarah built strength through her upper body, providing her neck with the support it needed.

We also helped Sarah set up her workstation to be more ergonomic, including adjusting the height of her computer monitor and rearranging her keyboard. And we gave her some tips for maintaining postural awareness throughout the day.

The result? After six weeks, Sarah's neck pain was entirely resolved — and she didn't have to seek additional treatment!



Ready To Attack Your Neck Pain at the Source?

If you're struggling with persistent neck pain, physical therapy at The Physical Therapy Institute can help you find lasting relief. Just as we did with Ally and Sarah, we'll assess your symptoms and develop a customized treatment plan that seeks to resolve your neck pain altogether. Call us today to get started!

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6723111/> • <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6093121/>

It's Easier To Get Physical Therapy Than You Think!

Did You Know You Have Direct Access To Physical Therapy?

Whether you want to come in for a check-up, suffered a recent injury, or want to improve your health, a physician referral is not needed. In the state of PA you have direct access to physical therapy!

You have the power to choose. Just as you can fill a prescription for medication at a pharmacy of your choice, you can choose

where to receive physical therapy as well. Taking care of yourself means taking charge of your healthcare, so remember that regardless of which physician you see, you have a choice when it comes to physical therapy.

Minor aches and pains are warning signals from your body to let you know something is not working properly. Don't put off the pain until it's too late. Come in today for a "Tune-Up."

Visit us online physicaltherapyinstitute.com or call [724.527.4264](tel:724.527.4264) today!

FREE In-Person 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.

[Click Here To Secure Your Spot](#)

Contact Us

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

No Doctor's Prescription Needed!

In the state of Pennsylvania you have direct access to physical therapy.

Recipe of The Month: Sushi Bowls

Ingredients:

- 2 c short grain white rice
- 2 c water
- 2 tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 8 oz imitation crab
- 1 carrot
- 1 cucumber
- 1 avocado
- 1 pack nori snack
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds
- 4 tbsp mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp sriracha

Instructions: Place the uncooked short grain rice in a medium sauce pot. Rinse the rice well and drain off as much water as possible. Add 2 cups of fresh water, place a lid on the pot, and bring to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, turn the heat down to low and let simmer for 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, turn the heat off and let the rice rest, undisturbed and with the lid in place, for 10 additional minutes. To prepare the sushi rice dressing, combine the rice vinegar, sugar, and salt in a small bowl. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. If needed, microwave for 15-30 seconds to help the sugar dissolve. While the rice is cooking, prepare the toppings. Shred or chop the imitation crab, shred or julienne the carrot, slice the avocado, slice the cucumber, and break the nori snacks into smaller pieces. Stir together the mayonnaise and sriracha in a small bowl. When the rice is finished cooking, sprinkle about 1/4 of the vinegar dressing over the rice, then gently fold or stir the rice to combine. Repeat the process until all of the vinegar dressing has been incorporated into the rice. To build your sushi bowls, place about 1 cup of the seasoned sushi rice in a bowl, then top with crab stick, carrot, cucumber, avocado, a few pieces of nori, a pinch of sesame seeds, and a drizzle of the sriracha mayo.

Patient Success Spotlight



"Dr. Tuscan and his team are treating me following my recent total knee replacement. I find him very responsive to my needs and concerns. His expertise in the field evokes a great deal of confidence in the plan that he has developed to get me back to 100%. I would and have recommended him to anyone who needs physical therapy." – J.M.

What's Your Success Story?

[Click here to tell your PT story and leave your review.](#)
We look forward to hearing from you!

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