

Touchette Regional Hospital Emphasizes 5 Ways Physical Therapy Can Help Reduce Stress

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We know that stress can take a toll on your entire body, this is why Touchette Regional Hospital is emphasizing 5 ways Physical Therapy can help reduce stress during National Physical Therapy Month. Anyone can experience stress in his or her daily life, whether it is from work, home or even from their surrounding environment. Some stress is not worrisome, but chronic levels of stress can have detrimental effects on our bodies involving the musculoskeletal system, nervous system, cardiovascular system, gastrointestinal system, and reproductive system. “Physical therapy can help with more than pain management and rehabilitation; therapists can offer techniques to assist in

decreasing chronic stress levels and add balance back into the body”, says Michael Riley, Director of Rehabilitation at TRH.

Here are 5 ways physical therapy can help reduce chronic levels of stress in the body:

1. Education on the Benefits of Movement Throughout the Day

Prolonged sitting can lead to deconditioning of all bodily systems and can lead to risks such as an increase in overall mortality, decrease in cardiovascular, psychological, and musculoskeletal health, as well as an increase in obesity. Physical therapists can educate you on ways to stand up and move throughout your day in a way that won't interrupt your daily tasks.

2. Exercise

Physical therapists can create an exercise program specifically for you that targets not only areas of weakness or decreased mobility, but target the body as a whole. Benefits of exercise include improving psychological health and daily energy, reducing the risk of chronic disease and the risk of falls, and improving sleep.

3. Hands-On Manual Therapy

Physical therapists have been educated on many forms of manual therapy to assist with pain management, overall body mobility, and health. Physical therapists will use techniques such as massage, joint mobilization, muscle energy techniques, and other forms of therapy to assist in the areas of concern. Manual therapy, when used in conjunction with other approaches, can be used to help musculoskeletal injuries, decrease anxiety and promote relaxation throughout the body.

4. Breathing Techniques

Our breathing patterns can be controlled by a specific part of the nervous system called the autonomic nervous system. Changing our breathing patterns can help promote “rest and digest” aspects of our nervous system, and lessen the “fight or flight” response. This will help decrease overall stress in the body. Physical therapists can teach you these breathing techniques to create more balance within the nervous system, and decrease overall chronic levels of stress hormones within the body.

5. Social Benefits

Most people attend physical therapy for assistance with pain management or physical rehabilitation, but what patients often find is a safe atmosphere where they can go and talk about their daily life problems as well. And now more than ever these interactions can be vitally important for some, as these sessions might be the only opportunity to socialize with others during the pandemic. By creating a space where patients feel comfortable and at ease, while receiving treatment, they're able to reduce stress levels thus boosting their overall well-being.

The PT team at both Touchette Regional Hospital and Archview Medical Center treat patients of all ages and a doctor's referral is not required. Our therapists are committed to helping you through individualized treatment plans. Call us at 618.332.5450 or 618.337.9461 to schedule your appointment.