



Next Step Newsletter

Next Step
Physical Therapy
(516) 681- 8070

October, 2008

Giving you information and answers to any physical therapy, health or fitness related questions

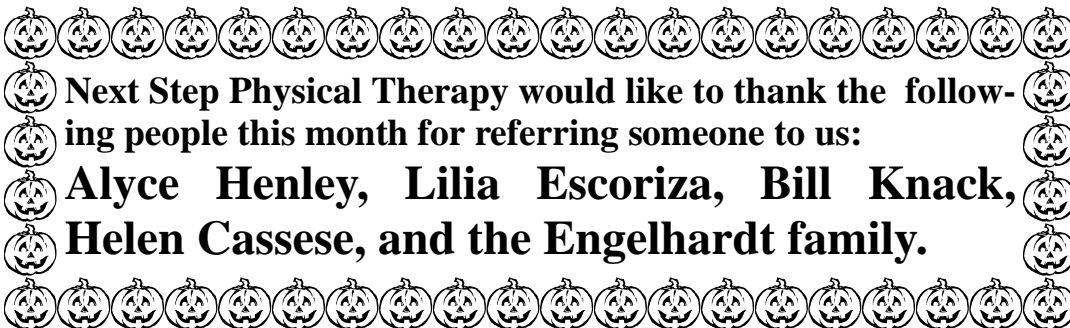
The Human Body: an adapting machine

Most of the time, we take our body for granted. We don't stop to think how extraordinary it is: How it is under constant bombardment from physical stresses and is a remarkable healing machine. Bones get stronger when we put more stress on them. Muscles get bigger (and stronger) when we put more stress on them. Even skin gets tougher (calluses) when we put more stress on it. Catch a cold? Rest assured, your body builds up immunity so that the same cold will not be able to make you sick again. What makes all of this happen is our bodies unbelievable ability to adapt to the way it is treated and its surrounding environment.

Unfortunately, this wonderful talent of the body to adapt can be a major force in causing many musculo-skeletal injuries. Fortunately, as a physical therapist, we use this same ability as a major means to correct those injuries. Let's look at an example.

The body will actually change the length (shorten or lengthen) of a muscle based on how you position that muscle most frequently. That is the bodies adaptation in response to its environment. If you put a stretch on the muscle frequently, the body will increase the length of the muscle to accommodate what you are doing to it. The same is true if you keep a muscle in a shortened position—it will shorten. If an individual happens to sit with their legs crossed frequently, and sits for long periods of the day (think couch potato or even office worker) some of the hip muscles will stretch and lengthen. Because of the lengthening, that muscle doesn't work as well when asked to perform like the same muscle that hasn't been elongated. As a result, the muscle has to work harder to even do common things such as walk. Eventually, that muscle can become strained, and painful.

You decide to go see your physical therapist (because you're so smart) and after the evaluation, the therapist realizes the problem - that the muscle is too long. Through exercises to encourage strength and shortening of the muscle (by using it in a shortened position) you and your therapist can correct this problem and get rid of your hip muscle pain. This concept of using the bodies ability to adapt is a fundamental principle for the physical therapist and is used in the majority of treatment programs. What an amazing body we have!!!



**Next Step Physical Therapy would like to thank the following people this month for referring someone to us:
Alyce Henley, Lilia Escoriza, Bill Knack,
Helen Cassese, and the Engelhardt family.**

Attention all folks: Construction is almost finished!!!

Finally, the wait is over. The carpet is down, the paint is up, and the new additional space to the gym looks great! We're adding new machines and equipment to fill the new space, and should be hiring a physical therapist soon. In addition, we have a new billing office and the new receptionist desk should be hear shortly, which will enhance our waiting room (along with some new pictures on the wall). Come on in and check us out!!!!

Updates

Welcome to the Next Step Newsletter!

Win a pair of movie tickets!!

The first 2 people to call us with the answer to this question wins a pair of movie tickets.

Name 3 parts of the body (from the article) that adapt based on how much stress you put them through.

- If you have a friend or family member that you think could use our help please let us know or have them call us.
- If you would like more information on any of the topics discussed here please give us a call.
- If you have a question that you would like to have answered (maybe in the next newsletter) please don't hesitate to call.
- What topics are you interested in and would like to see in the newsletter? Let us know.

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