

Special Interest Articles

Balance & Falls

Moms Posture Tips

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Serving the Northern Baltimore County Community with articles of interest, significant developments in the physical therapy field and –of course- what's new at Hereford Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine.

Balance & Falls...What you need to know!

Anyone who has ever slipped on a patch of ice knows how unnerving it can be to lose your balance—for a moment your world is literally turned upside down. Because falling is such a common and potentially serious problem—1 in 4 people over the age of 65 (who live at home) will fall during the next year—it's important to find out what you can do to decrease your risk and improve your general health and mobility.

How Balance Works:

Your brain, muscles, and bones work together to maintain your body's balance

and to keep you from falling, whether you're walking, rising from a chair, or climbing stairs. They also let you navigate sloping or uneven surfaces. Balance relies on three types of sensory information; your eyes, your body's internal sense of spatial orientation and inner ears.

There are various reasons why your sense of balance can become impaired. In older adults, **poor posture**—particularly if you tend to slouch forward and have rounded upper shoulders—can sometimes cause unsteadiness.

Furthermore, **your base of support** is important in keeping

you balanced. If you have a wide "pyramid"-type stance, you're less likely to lose your balance or fall than if your feet are close together in a "pencil" stance. **Disease** can also rob you of a strong sense of balance. People with diabetes, for example, may suffer from numbness in the lower extremities and feet—a problem that makes detecting obstacles or dangers more difficult. People with **arthritis**, or who have had surgery on their hips, knees, or feet, may lack the flexibility and range of motion necessary to avoid falling.

Strength, flexibility, and endurance are crucial to maintaining balance and

...Research indicates the risk of falling can be reduced dramatically with physical therapy intervention...

Balance & Falls continued....

preventing falls. Even if your basic perception of balance is good—you have normal vision and no inner ear problems—you can still be at risk for falls if your muscles are weakened or stiff, or if you tire easily.

Fortunately, physical therapy can help you learn to

cultivate and maintain higher levels of strength, flexibility, and endurance in a way that still feels safe and secure. Research indicates that the risk of falling in older adults can be reduced **dramatically** when specific exercises, activities, and interventions are prescribed by physical therapists.

Unfortunately falls do occur. If you would like additional information on how Hereford Physical Therapy can help you prevent falls, please feel free to call and talk to one of our physical therapists.

****Article source**
American Physical Therapy Association**

Medicare Update...

On December 20, 2006, President Bush signed The Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006 (HR 6111) that extend the process allowing Medicare beneficiaries needing care above the financial limits to apply for additional coverage.

As many Medicare beneficiaries are aware, there is a \$1740 "cap" on coverage for outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapy services. The bill

President Bush signed keeps the monetary cap in place but allows for the exception process to also remain. If this bill had not been signed, there would have been no avenue for seniors to apply for additional benefit coverage if needed.

As an example, if a Medicare beneficiary had a total knee replacement in January, received outpatient therapy then had another injury or surgery later in the year,

the patient may be financially responsible for physical therapy fees if they went over the \$1740 cap. The exception process allows beneficiaries with certain conditions to exceed the cap.

HPT urges all seniors to contact their representatives to support legislation repealing this arbitrary and unnecessary financial limitation.

Posture Tips for Moms...

Lifting and carrying a child, picking up toys and pushing a stroller are normal daily tasks for the busy mother. Unfortunately, these repeated tasks can lead to aches and pains. The following are tips to ease these pains and help prevent some lifting injuries.

Lifting Your Child from the Floor

When picking your child up off the floor, you should use a half kneel lift. First, stand close to your child on the floor.



While keeping your back straight, place one foot slightly forward of the other foot, bend your hips and knees to lower yourself to one knee.

Once down on the floor, grasp your child close to your body with both arms. Tighten your stomach muscles and slowly return to the standing position.

Carrying/Holding your Child

When holding or carrying your child, you should always hold him or her close to your body. Avoid one arm carries. When using a child carrier, be sure to keep your back straight and shoulders back to avoid straining your back or neck.



Lifting your Child From Crib

If your child's crib has rails that lower, place them in the lowest position. As you lift keep feet shoulder width apart, bend knees slightly. With both arms, hold child close to your body and lift using your legs and hips avoiding lifting with your back.

Using these tips will help moms keep a healthy back while maintaining a hectic schedule.

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact our office and speak with one of our physical therapists.

*****Source*****

American Physical Therapy Association

Lifting and carrying a child are normal tasks for a busy mom that can cause strain on the neck and back...

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“Providing Quality Outpatient Physical Therapy”

We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.herefordpt.com

See us on the sidelines...

Hereford Physical Therapy's athletic trainers and physical therapists provide on site medical coverage for

Hereford High School. Look for HPT's staff on the sidelines during this spring's athletic events!!



What's New at Hereford Physical Therapy??

Hereford Physical Therapy is pleased to welcome Deb Hood to our staff.

Deb recently worked for a local real estate company. She is coordinating front desk / receptionist

duties and is a pleasant addition to our team.



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OR CURRENT RESIDENT