

Bodies in Motion

TOTAL HEALTH CENTER NEWS LETTER

“Expert Care with Caring Hands”

Volume 24

Total Health Center is a full service physical/occupational therapy clinic where expert patient care is our first priority. We treat a full range of orthopedic and neurologic conditions. Our clinic has therapists with advanced training and specialist certifications. Our goal is to help you, the patient, reach your full potential.

Pillow Talk: Does Your Pillow Affect Your Sleep?

Pillows—dozens of them promise you a pain-free night's sleep. Some claim to relieve neck pain. Others say they align the spine. Many of these pillows are expensive. But do they really work? The answer is: It depends.

Many factors determine the effectiveness of a pillow in reducing pain and improving sleep. These include



the part of your body that hurts—different style pillows are marketed to reduce neck, lower back or knee pain

your specific condition—let us evaluate why you are hurting

the position you sleep in—about 70% of people are side sleepers; the other 30% are back or stomach sleepers

the material the pillow is made of—feathers, foam, contoured foam, polyester or latex

the age of the pillow—some materials break down faster than others

In an Australian experiment, side sleepers used various types of pillows for one week each and reported their waking symptoms. Latex pillows most effectively prevented morning neck pain. Feather pillows consistently performed the worst, and there was no difference between regular foam pillows and contour foam pillows. This experiment applied only to side sleepers, but it indicates that pillow choice matters.

With our aging population, cervical spine issues are common, and physical therapists are often asked about them. Before you shop, we can help you **understand the origin of your pain and the body mechanics involved**, and assure you that fixing one sleep-pain problem will not cause a different one. **Try the pillow in the store and be sure you can return it.** When you get home, before you unwrap it, try the pillow again until you are sure it is

Call us at (269) 968-0888
Mon to Thurs 7am-7pm
Fridays 7am-4pm



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Recipe of the Month

Polynesian Fruit Bars

- 3 Cups rolled or quick oats
- 1 Cup unsweetened coconut
- 1 Cup oat flour – could blend regular rolled oats at high speed in a blender to make flour
- 1 Cup orange juice
- ½ Cup chopped nuts
- 1 Banana, mashed
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 20 oz can unsweetened crushed pineapple
- 2 Cups chopped dates

Mix all ingredients together, except pineapple and dates. Use more orange juice to hold mixture together if necessary. Press half of mixture firmly into a 9x12" glass baking dish. Cook pineapple and dates until thickened, then spread over oat mixture. Top with remaining oat mixture and bake at 350° for 30 minutes.

comfortable. If not, take it back.

If you are in doubt about the effect of a particular pillow on your pain, bring it to us for an evaluation. When we determine the source of your pain, we can help you select an appropriate pillow so you can get a refreshing night's sleep.

Stay on Your Toes: Treating a Fifth Metatarsal Fracture

The fifth metatarsal is a bone that extends from the cuboid bone near the ankle to the base of the little toe. Run your hand along the outside of your foot, and you will feel a bump or tuberosity on the fifth metatarsal. This bump and the area just in front of it are prone to injury.

Fractures of the fifth metatarsal are common in dancers and in sports where athletes pivot forcefully. They can be difficult to heal because the blood supply is poor in the region where the fractures occur. There are three main types of fifth metatarsal fractures: avulsion fracture, Jones fracture and stress fracture.



In an **avulsion fracture**, a chip of bone is pulled off when the tendon attached to the metatarsal is overstressed. Avulsion fractures usually occur when the ankle rolls inward. They cause pain, swelling and bruising along the outside edge of the foot, especially in the area where the bone bumps out. Avulsion fractures are treated with **immobilization** and **stiff boots** or a **weight-bearing cast**. Healing usually takes six to eight weeks.

A **Jones fracture** is a sudden fracture three-quarters of an inch (1 cm) beyond (proximal to) the metatarsal. Jones fractures often occur when the toe is pointed down, the heel is off the ground and pressure is applied to the outside of the ankle. Symptoms are similar to an avulsion fracture. Jones fractures are treated with a **non-weight-bearing cast** for six to eight weeks, followed by **physical therapy**. We can help you learn to use crutches during the non-weight-bearing phase.

A **stress fracture** develops over time from the repeated application of force (produced by jumping or running, for instance), overuse or weakening of bone caused by osteoporosis. Low-grade pain and swelling are often present for weeks before a diagnosis is made. Stress fractures are difficult to heal. They may be treated like a Jones fracture with a non-weight-bearing cast for up to 20 weeks, or they may require surgery. During the healing period, the patient may maintain fitness by cycling, aqua-running or resistance training on equipment that does not involve the affected area.

Physical therapy is always needed after the stress fracture has healed.

A fracture of the fifth metatarsal is a common and disabling injury. After your fracture has healed and the cast has been removed, we can work with you and your physician to design a program to safely restore strength and flexibility to your ankle.

Patient Testimonials

Just keep doing what you are doing – the atmosphere, expertise and care are all excellent. I have been to other PT places and this has been far and above the others. Thank you.

P. Meredith

The professional quality atmosphere was beyond expectation. I have been to a number of PT clinics and this far exceeded all others – It was a pleasure to have such consistent, excellent care!

C. Hoffman

Everything was good. Thank you for all your help.

M. Noe

Everyone here is great to work with, they make it almost fun!

T. Brodbeck