

# Newsletter



## Does Stress Cause Neck Pain?

**HAYMARKET**  
PHYSICAL THERAPY, LLC  
*Results you can feel, from a team you can trust.*

**Bealeton:** 540.952.0138

**Bristow:** 571.832.2342

**Gainesville:** 703.570.1633

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## Our Mission

*To provide an atmosphere of healing, trust, and empowerment to achieve optimal health and wellness, while generating results that you can feel.*

## Our Services

- Physical Therapy
- Dry Needling
- Laser Therapy
- Personal Training
- Pre & Post-Op Rehabilitation
- Sports Rehabilitation
- Vestibular Rehabilitation

## Contact Us

*We are here for you. Give us a call today to start your healing journey.*

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## Does Stress Cause Neck Pain?

Do you notice your neck seems to hurt more when you are stressed? Do you find yourself rubbing your neck after a difficult day on the job? You might be suffering from stress-related neck pain. During times of high stress and anxiety, our muscles tense up. As muscles tighten, the more pressure and pain they cause.

The pain and tension can interfere with our ability to work and do our daily activities. It can also interfere with the enjoyment of your life including recreational activities and spending time with friends and family.

The good news is that with guidance from your physical therapist you can find solutions to your pain and how to manage your stress, so you can get back to living the life you enjoy!

Call Haymarket Physical Therapy today to learn how we can help you to keep living the kind of life you want with less pain.

### What is causing my neck pain?

Our neck does not like to remain in any one position for extended periods, like when you're driving, looking down at your phone, or using a computer. Too often the posture we hold our neck is also contributing to our pain.

Prolonged sitting can lead to a forward head position resulting in tension to soft tissue (i.e. muscles, tendons, and ligaments) or negative changes to our blood flow.

The muscles of our neck function at their best when we move them. So holding our heads in one position leads to irritation of the muscles and affects our ability to move our head and neck. This loss of mobility leads to pain and less enjoyment of your daily activities.

# How Does Stress Cause Neck Pain?

Stress-induced neck pain is fairly common. The effects of stress on the body include the release of stress hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol, that when elevated for long durations, are associated with increased pain sensitivity. The more stress we experience the more likely we will also experience pain.

While chronic stress alone can trigger neck pain, a few factors can make it worse. Office environments tend to create neck pain problems. Modern offices confine people to chairs, poor posture, and little mobility.

In addition, a lot of people also spend a lot of time driving with poor posture and added stress due to traffic and road rage. The combination of all of these factors makes your chances of stress-related neck pain higher.

## How physical therapy can help my neck pain

Neck pain can be alleviated with physical therapy. Neck pain is often caused by poor postural habits or sustained positions. Relief of this pain typically occurs immediately following the correction of the abnormal postures.



An easy way to find good posture is to imagine your breast bone is lifted towards the sky. This will naturally cause your spine to straighten out – lifting you. This helps alleviate the tension immediately and is something you can do multiple times a day!

Physical therapists can target your pain's source by examining your symptoms. Then, they can offer exercises that stretch and/or relax your neck muscles.

For example, sit in a chair with your back resting against the back of the chair and simply lean your chest and shoulder back (i.e. over the top of the backrest). Keep your eyes forward and lean straight back. This is called a neck retraction and is very effective at alleviating tension!



In some cases, manual techniques including mobilizations or therapeutic massage are used to alleviate your pain and allow you to tolerate stretching. A custom-tailored program of neck exercises will assure your neck stays loose, limber, and healthy.

Your physical therapist can also teach you how to arrange your working environment ergonomically and recommend various stress reduction strategies to ensure healthy life behavior.

## 10 Ways to Reduce Stress

1. Exercise
2. Get a Massage
3. Laugh More
4. Disconnect from Social Media
5. Deep Breathing
6. Eat Right
7. Get 8 Hours of Sleep
8. Reduce Caffeine and Alcohol Intake
9. Make Time for Family and Hobbies
10. Take a Yoga Class

## Contact our clinic today

If you're dealing with neck pain, you're not alone. Call our office today and schedule an assessment. Even if your neck pain is caused by stress, it still needs attention. We'll work side by side with your goals, creating the proactive, effective programs you need to achieve mobility once more. We offer the results you are looking for!

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC672311/> - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2270377/> - <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30969542/> - <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28972599/>

# Recipe of the Month

## Sabrina Dixon's Cajun Pretzels



### Ingredients:

- 1 large bag of broken hard pretzels
- 1/2 tsp. dill weed
- 1 1/2 tsp. smokey seasoning
- 2 tsp. ground cayenne pepper (add more or less to adjust spice level)
- 1 Tbsp. creole or Cajun seasoning
- 1 Tbsp. broiled steak seasoning
- 1 Tbsp. lemon pepper
- 1 oz. pkg. Dry Ranch Salad Dressing Mix (original)
- 1 1/4 cup canola oil (Sabrina only uses 3/4 cup)

**Instructions:** Preheat oven to 200 degrees F. Break pretzels into small pieces and set aside. In a large roasting pan, combine all seasonings with oil and mix well. Add pretzels to the mixture and stir until all pretzels are covered with the mixture. Bake for 55 to 60 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes. For more flavor,

## Staff Spotlight

### Dr. Courtney Crews, PT, DPT

Director of Rehabilitation of Bristow



Courtney is a graduate of Winston-Salem State University where he earned his Doctorate of Physical Therapy. He began working at Haymarket Physical Therapy in 2022. His favorite thing about working at HPT is the great group of people he works with who make the job enjoyable. Prior to working at HPT Courtney completed his undergraduate degree at UNC-Chapel Hill and is a big fan of his

Tarheel sport teams. In his free time he enjoys exercising, playing softball, and trying out new places to eat.



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## At-Home Exercise Chin Tucks

**Instructions:** Begin lying on your back with your neck relaxed. Gently touch your chin backward as if you're making a double chin. Hold for five seconds, relax, and repeat 10 times.



*Give us a call if you have any questions or concerns while performing this exercise.*

## Patient Success

**"I appreciate everything they did for me during my recovery."**

"The staff is very knowledgeable and very friendly which made my experience with them outstanding. I had previously gone to two other physical therapy offices in the area and the staff and therapy I received at Haymarket physical therapy in Bristow was the best! I appreciate everything they did for me during my recovery." — **B. M.**



## We can Help You

- Regain range of motion, strength, and mobility
- Lessen your need for pain medications
- Return faster to an active, independent life
- Live longer — and better

**GET STARTED AT [HAYMARKETPT.COM](https://www.haymarketpt.com)**