



THE SURPRISING CONNECTION

Between Neck
Pain and a Weak
Upper Back

3 EXERCISES

*to Strengthen Your
Shoulders &
Upper Back*

FREE CONSULTATION!
DETAILS INSIDE

INSIDE: • Immunity-Boosting Vitamin
Burst Smoothie

910-604-6226



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THE SURPRISING CONNECTION Between NECK PAIN and a **WEAK** UPPER BACK

Plus, a Tale of Two Patients:
One Who Strength-Trained,
and One Who Didn't

Do you ever find yourself trying to rub out a sore spot in your neck or find it difficult to turn your head? Neck pain is a common concern that can range from a mild nuisance to a big problem. And while neck pain can have several different causes, one contributing factor often gets overlooked: weakness in the shoulders or upper back.

When we deal with persistent aches and pains, poor muscle strength often turns out to be a significant underlying factor. When a muscle isn't as strong as it should be, other muscles have to step in to compensate, which puts unnecessary strain on them — and makes them more susceptible to overuse injuries. The result? Seemingly random aches and pains that “come out of nowhere.”

If you're struggling with persistent neck pain, there's a chance that the problem is rooted in your shoulders or upper back. Slouching and prolonged sitting weakens those upper back muscles, forcing your neck muscles to work overtime — and leading to pain.

Let's look at two case studies from the Shoreline Physical Therapy files. Both people suffered from neck pain, but only one went through a dedicated strength training program. What happened next?

Ally's Story: No Time for Strength-Training

Ally was a receptionist who spent long days typing on a computer, answering the phone, and doing other clerical work. She started to notice a slight pain in her neck while she was at work. Although she ignored it at first, the pain persisted. She knew she needed to seek help.

Ally made an appointment with us, where we took her through a comprehensive mechanical assessment, including several movement and functional screens. We determined that she had mechanical neck pain and was a good candidate to proceed with physical therapy.

We started Ally's treatment with acute pain management using manual therapy techniques and some specific range of motion exercises, which did help her immediate symptoms. However,

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The Surprising Connection Between Neck Pain and a Weak Upper Back

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we knew it wouldn't be enough to fully resolve her pain, so we suggested she begin a multi-week therapeutic exercise program to restore strength in her upper back and shoulders, helping to reduce the strain on her neck.

Unfortunately, Ally had decided to go back to school, and between work, her classes, and her family, she simply didn't have time for physical therapy. So, while we were able to help Ally in the short term, her pain persisted in the long term, eventually landing her back in our clinic a year later.

Sarah's Story: A Dedicated Strength Training Program

Sarah's situation was very similar to Ally's. She was a marketing assistant who also spent a great deal of time on both her laptop and a mobile phone, and she also experienced a gradual onset of neck pain. And, like Ally, she paid us a visit when it became too much.

We gave her a similar diagnosis: mechanical neck pain brought on by improper posture and prolonged sitting. We also provided her with acute pain relief through targeted range of motion exercise and manual therapy. The difference? Sarah was able to continue her treatment with a six-week therapeutic exercise program.

We met with Sarah twice weekly to guide her through a custom set of targeted neck, shoulder, and upper back exercises. We started with gentle stretches and mobility work before progressing to resistance training exercises. With the help of some dumbbells and an exercise band, Sarah built strength through her upper body, providing her neck with the support it needed.

We also helped Sarah set up her workstation to be more

ergonomic, including adjusting the height of her computer monitor and rearranging her keyboard. And we gave her some tips for maintaining postural awareness throughout the day.

The result? After six weeks, Sarah's neck pain was entirely resolved — and she didn't have to seek additional treatment!

Ready To Attack Your Neck Pain at the Source?

If you're struggling with persistent neck pain, physical therapy at Shoreline Physical Therapy can help you find lasting relief. Just as we did with Ally and Sarah, we'll assess your symptoms and develop a customized treatment plan that seeks to resolve your neck pain altogether.

**CALL USTODAY
TO GET STARTED!**



CALL 910-604-6226

Naturally Relieve Your Aches & Pains Today With Our Free Ebooks!

Looking for ways to relieve your pain before seeing one of our physical therapists?

Download our **FREE Ebooks today!**



Scan the QR code to download a free Ebook for tips that can help you feel better today.

IMMUNITY-BOOSTING VITAMIN BURST SMOOTHIE

- 1 cup fresh orange juice
- ½ cup milk (coconut, almond, or substitute plain or vanilla yogurt)
- ½ cup frozen strawberries
- ½ cup mango
- ½ cup pineapple
- 1 tsp freshly minced ginger
- Optional: 1-2 tsp raw honey; a handful of fresh baby spinach; 1-2 tbsp almond butter

Add the ingredients to a blender and blend on high speed until completely smooth, scraping down the blender as needed. Add a drizzle of honey or extra ginger to taste, pour into glasses, and enjoy. Bursting with healing Vitamin C, this hydrating smoothie will increase the infection-fighting ability of your immune system.

fountainavenuekitchen.com/recipe/immunity-boosting-smoothie

CALL US TODAY IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY PAIN AT 910-604-6226



3 Exercises to Strengthen Your Shoulders & Upper Back

Maintaining strength throughout your shoulders and upper back is crucial to avoid neck pain!

Here's an overview of three common resistance training exercises we often use to help people with neck discomfort. Before trying any of them yourself, make an appointment with our team to ensure you're using the right weight and proper form.

1. Prone T: Start by lying on your stomach with your arms straight out to your sides at shoulder level with your thumbs pointing at the ceiling. Raise your head, chest, shoulders, and arms straight up off the floor as high as possible while keeping your legs down. Pause briefly and then lower back down.



2. Prone Y On Swiss Ball: Start by lying with your chest on an exercise ball and your legs extended back behind you. Hold your arms straight down toward the floor slightly in front of your head. Slowly raise them diagonally out to your sides above your head and pull your shoulder blades together. Slowly lower them back down.



3. Prone Scapular Retraction Y: Start by lying flat on your stomach on a mat or table. Place your arms so your body makes a "Y" on the mat and your palms are facing down. Pull your shoulder blades back and down and raise your arms straight up toward the ceiling. Slowly lower them back down.



A dedicated strength-training program is a great way to reduce neck discomfort. Schedule an appointment with us to get started with one of your own!

CALL 910-604-6226

Our Patients Get Great Results!



"All the people at Shoreline are fantastic. They helped me after my shoulder surgery and now they are getting me back on my feet after my car accident. **I would give them 10 stars if I could.**" — Shannon C.

Share Your PT Success Story



You might just be the inspiration for someone else to get the help they need. Just scan the QR Code to leave us a review.

FREE CONSULTATION

Not sure if physical therapy at Shoreline Physical Therapy is right for you?

We offer a free consultation to see if we would be a good fit for you!

Give us a call at **(910) 604-6226** or visit us online at **www.shorelineptnc.com** to schedule your appointment!

