

# essential



# physio

JULY 2020

## Three Telltale Signs It's Time to See Your Physio

Your physiotherapist has a wide variety of skills and can help treat so much more than just pain and injury. Here are a few reasons to visit your physiotherapist that can keep you healthy and pain-free, before injury strikes.

### Stiffness and Inflexibility

Almost all of us have experienced pain and stiffness after a day of increased or unaccustomed exercise. This kind of stiffness usually wears off quickly and is referred to as DOMS (delayed onset muscles soreness). However, if you find yourself feeling stiff for more extended periods, or even most the time – it might be time to see a physiotherapist. There are many different causes of stiffness and inflexibility; by far, the most common is lack of movement. Our joints and muscles both lose flexibility if not moved through their range regularly. Muscle stiffness can feel like a tightness with a bouncy feeling of restriction, and joint stiffness can create a hard 'blocked' feeling when you try to move.

When it comes to stiffness the evolves from lack of movement, you may not even notice that you have lost range, as it can be very easy to adapt your movements to compensate. Your physiotherapist can help you to identify where you have areas of inflexibility and help you to exercise, stretch and mobilise your joints to get them back to a healthy range. Disease processes such as Osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid Arthritis can also cause prolonged stiffness, and your physiotherapist is well equipped to help you deal with these conditions.

### Reduced Strength or Weakness

There are many reasons for weakness in the body, from generalised disuse, weakness in one muscle group following an injury, neurological weakness or structural weakness of joint following a

ligament tear. Musculoskeletal deficiency of any kind can predispose you to future injuries and can be surprisingly difficult to resolve without targeted exercises. Your physiotherapist can determine the cause of your weakness and determine the best treatment to restore your muscle strength.

### Reduced Balance

Keeping your balance is a very complicated process, and your body works hard to make sure you stay on your feet. Humans have a very small base of support for our height, and we use all our senses together to determine which movements we should make to stay upright, including our visual, vestibular, muscular and sensory systems. As balance is so essential for walking, if one system that supports our balance begins to weaken, the others will quickly compensate, so you may not notice that your balance has worsened until you fall or trip over more often.

As a general rule, balance does deteriorate as we age, but this does not mean that falling should be an inevitable part of aging. Actively working to maintain or improve your balance can have a significant effect on your quality of life and confidence in getting around. Your physiotherapist is able to test all the aspects of your balance and provide effective rehabilitation to help keep you on your feet.



## Shoulder Pain



Shoulder pain can actually be coming from dysfunction or injury in the neck. Common signs that shoulder pain is related to the neck are pins and needles, numbness and tingling.



## Brain Teasers

1. Turn me on my side and I last forever. Cut me in half and I am nothing. What am I?
2. What do you throw away when you want to use it, but bring back when you don't?

PHYSIOFACT.

MOST OF THE HEAT IN  
YOUR BODY IS  
CREATED BY MUSCLE  
CONTRACTION.  
SHIVERING IS YOUR  
BODY TRYING TO  
WARM ITSELF.

# Tips for Managing Tendon Injuries

Tendons, the soft connective tissues that join muscles to bone are known for being notoriously difficult to treat once injured. The reason for this is that often they are injured through stress or overuse, and compared to muscles have relatively small blood flow, which is essential for healing.

Tendons and muscles work together to move your joints and are called a contractile unit. As muscles are exercised and gain strength, the attaching tendons are also placed under tension and adapt to this to become stronger. If the load placed on the tissues exceeds their capacity, the tendon fibres can begin to break down and become stiff and painful.

## Is my pain related to a tendon injury?

For an accurate diagnosis, you will need to be assessed by a physiotherapist. However, some signs that your pain might be coming from an issue with your tendon are;

- The pain is quite specific and can be felt over the tendon itself.
- The pain is worse when under stress and improves when rested.
- The pain improves after exercise has started, but it might be worse the day after.
- The area around the tendon may feel stiff after periods of rest, particularly in the morning.

## How are tendon injuries treated?

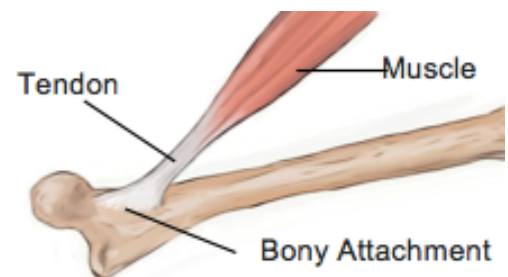
When it comes to recovery, tendons are often treated differently to other injuries. While each tendon injury is unique and will require assessment and intervention by a physiotherapist, there are a few general approaches that usually help with all tendon injuries.

Reducing your activity to a comfortable level is the first step to recovery. Complete rest can actually delay healing as the tendon simply becomes weaker and less able to cope with subsequent loads. Your physiotherapist can provide you with a targeted exercise program to

aid your recovery. Eccentric exercises, which are exercises that work alongside gravity, have been shown to stimulate tendon healing and strength.

Stretching may aggravate your injury and should be used with caution. Assessment of any biomechanical faults or stresses that are placing undue load on the tendon is also a central component of treatment. Your physiotherapist is able to guide you with your recovery and return to sport to avoid aggravating any injury.

**The information in this newsletter is not a replacement for proper medical advice. Always see a medical professional for an assessment of your condition.**



Answers:

1. The Number 8

2. An anchor

# Homemade Apple Crumble

## Ingredients:

### Filling

500g Apples, peeled and chopped  
50g Brown Sugar  
1 Tbsp. Plain Flour  
1 pinch ground Cinnamon  
1 tsp. Ginger, finely grated

### Crumble

250g Plain Flour  
150g Brown Sugar  
200g Rolled Oats  
250g Butter, melted  
2 Tbsp. Honey



1. Preheat oven to 180C/350F.
2. Place flour, sugar, and oats into a mixing bowl. Melt butter and add to bowl, mixing through dry ingredients until well combined.
3. Place filling ingredients in a saucepan with ½ cup water and cook on medium heat until apples begin to soften.
4. Grease an ovenproof dish with butter or line with baking paper and spoon in the fruit mixture and cover with crumble mixture. Drizzle honey over the top of mixture.
5. Place in the preheated oven and cook for 30-40 minutes until browned.
6. Serve hot, use custard, ice-cream or vanilla yogurt as an optional side.

Ready to serve for four.



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