



Priority  
Physical  
Therapy

# Health & Wellness

The Newsletter About Your Health And Caring For Your Body

PRIORITYPT.NET

*Pictured: Susie Begley  
Patient Care Coordinator*

## Does Stress Cause Neck Pain?

Understanding  
Nicole's Neck Pain

Best Ever Carrot  
Cake With  
Buttermilk Glaze

Patient  
Success

MISSOURI 573.769.6166 | SOUTH CAROLINA 843.536.4888



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Physical  
Therapy**

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## For Our Palmyra Friends...



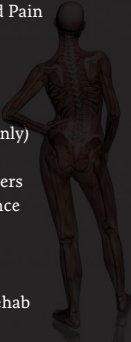
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## Make Your Body A Priority

We Can Help you with:

- Arthritis
- Back Pain
- Balance & Gait Disorder
- Brain Injury
- Chronic Pain
- Dizziness & Vertigo
- Elbow Wrist & Hand Pain
- Fall Prevention
- Foot & Ankle Pain
- Headaches
- Hip & Knee Pain
- Incontinence (MO only)
- Neck Pain
- Neurological Disorders
- Pediatric Incontinence
- Pediatrics
- Pelvic Pain
- Post-Covid Rehab
- Pre/Post Surgical Rehab
- Shoulder Pain
- Sports Injuries
- Stroke
- TMJ Dysfunction
- Whiplash
- Work Injuries



## Does Stress Cause Neck Pain?

Does stress cause neck pain? The short answer is no! At Priority Physical Therapy, we like to say "contributes to" instead of "cause." The casual way healthcare professionals throw around terms can lead to confusion and, worse still, ineffective treatment. Fortunately, our highly skilled therapists know how to dig deep and find the root cause of your neck pain, and this information helps you find relief!

Let's discuss Nicole, a 40-something-year-old working mother of three. Nicole was used to being very active, balancing her work schedule with getting her kids to all the various activities and school functions that come with being a mom nowadays.

Her neck pain first started as a crick in the neck when she woke up one morning. As the day progressed from driving her kids around to sitting at her desk, she noticed turning her head became more difficult and painful, making focusing on work nearly impossible.

Nicole struggled to figure out why her neck started hurting and came to the conclusion that stress "must be" the culprit. The more pain and difficulty moving she had, the more convinced she was that stress was to blame.

## Call Or Text Us Today!

Missouri | 573-769.6166

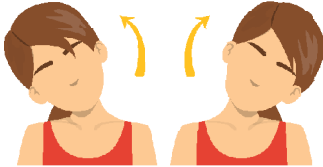
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**PRIORITYPT.NET**

# Understanding Nicole's Neck Pain

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## Exercise Of The Month: Side Bend Neck Stretch



**Instructions:** Start standing or seated with your arms alongside your body. Engage your abdominal muscles to support a straight spine and draw your shoulder blades back and down. Slowly bend your neck to bring your right ear toward your right shoulder while keeping your shoulders in the same position. Hold this position for 5-10 seconds. Perform on the left side. Do 2-4 repetitions on both sides.

One of the most common things we hear from our patients is that their pain started for “no apparent reason.” Like Nicole, people will wake up with a crick in their neck or notice a stiffness turning when driving in the car. It is also common for people to notice tightness in their upper back and neck after a long day.

So, what is actually the source of the pain? In most cases, there is an issue with the neck joints or the neck muscles due to prolonged positions. Our neck joints don't like remaining in any position for extended periods. In Nicole's case, she first noticed her pain in the morning, which may have been related to her neck position while sleeping. It is also important to note that in Nicole's case, the first sign of any issue was in the morning when she woke up, unrelated to stress.

As Nicole's day progressed, her pain got worse. But this also was more likely related to how she held her neck while driving or sitting at her computer. In both cases, her posture, specifically how she held her neck, seems to have contributed to her 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 best when we move them. So, holding her head in one position likely led to irritation of

the muscles and affected her ability to move her neck, which in turn caused stress.

Stress “contributes” to neck pain because, when we experience stress, our bodies naturally respond by tensing up as a protective measure. This tension can lead to discomfort, particularly in the neck and upper back region. Research studies have found that individuals with higher stress levels reported increased neck pain as compared to those with lower stress levels. This is why we say “contributes” to, but not the cause of, neck pain.

### How Physical Therapy Can Help Alleviate Neck Pain

We will target the source of your pain by performing a thorough examination, starting with your medical history and details about how, when, and where your symptoms began. As we saw with Nicole, determining how, when, and why the pain started helps us eliminate possibilities and get to the actual root cause(s).

Our therapists will also analyze your posture and movement to identify any limitations or restrictions contributing to your condition. We'll use this information to design a program that addresses your specific needs.

Our treatment plans focus on relieving your pain and improving your posture, mobility, strength, etc., educating you about managing your symptoms. Your program will likely include manual therapy (i.e., soft tissue work and/or joint mobilizations), targeted stretches, exercises, activity modification, or posture recommendations.

We'll listen to your unique situation and specific issues and then work to help you find relief and get back to your normal routine.

Sources: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1836955320301417?via%3Dihub> • <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36180150/> • <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC21270377/> • <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28972599/>

## Book Your Appointment Today!

If you're dealing with neck pain or looking for someone to help you figure out what is causing your issues, call us today and set up a consultation!

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# Best Ever Carrot Cake With Buttermilk Glaze



## Cake:

- 2 c all- purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 3 lg eggs
- 2 c sugar
- 3/4 c vegetable oil
- 3/4 c buttermilk
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 c grated carrot
- 1 can (8-ounce) crushed pineapple, drained
- 3 1/2 oz flaked coconut
- 1 c chopped pecans or walnuts

## Buttermilk Glaze:

- 1 c sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 c buttermilk
- 1/2 c butter
- 1 Tbsp light corn syrup
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract

## Cream Cheese Frosting

- 3/4 c butter softened
- 11 oz cream cheese (1 8 ounce & 1 3 ounce package)
- 3 c sifted powdered sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract

**Cake:** Pre-heat oven to 350. Line 3 (9-inch) round cake pans with wax paper; lightly grease and flour wax paper. Set pans aside. Stir together first 4 ingredients. Beat eggs and next 4 ingredients at medium speed with an electric mixer until smooth. Add flour mixture, beating at low speed until blended. Fold in carrot and next 3 ingredients.


**Buttermilk Glaze:** Bring first 5 ingredients to a boil in a large Dutch oven over medium- high heat. Boil, stirring often, 4 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in vanilla.

**Cream Cheese Frosting:** Beat butter and cream cheese at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Add powdered sugar and vanilla; beat until smooth.

**Directions:** Pour cake batter into prepared cake pans. Bake at 350 for 25 to 30 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Drizzle buttermilk glaze evenly over layers; let cake cool in pans on top of wire racks 15 minutes. Remove from pans, and cool completely on wire racks. Spread the cream cheese frosting between layers and on top and sides of cake.



## Patient Success

 This is the best therapy place to come to. Kim does everything she can to help you get better. She will listen to what you have to say about what is wrong with you. Kim is the best! The environment is very nice here. I was having trouble sleeping and my shoulder was hurting. I am gradually sleeping better and my shoulder is not hurting like it was. I was also having issues with my hips and she gave me exercises for them also. I just really appreciate everything she has done for me. About four years ago I came to her because of osteoporosis and with the exercises she gave me I have strengthened my core and have gotten better! I would advise anyone to come here and have her help you!

— Annette D.

### Share Your Success! Scan To Share Your Story!

The best way to help a small business in the community is by leaving a Google review! We want to help more people. Share your great experience with Priority Physical Therapy and help us heal our neighbors.



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CODE TO LEAVE YOUR  
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