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# BALANCED HEALTH & SPORTS

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## December News

### Why do I get Muscle Cramps?

By: Justine Bouchard, RMT

As a massage therapist, I am often asked by patients: “Why do I get muscle cramps?” Whether it’s in the middle of the night or in the middle of an exercise, a muscle spasm can take your breath away and really put a cramp in your routine. There are many different factors that can lead to that dreaded muscle holding on to dear life in a state of contraction. They include:



### Holiday Hours

Thursday December 22 -

8am -8pm

Friday December 23 -

8am-6pm

Saturday December 24 -

Closed

Monday December 26 -

Closed

Tuesday December 27-

8am-8pm

Saturday December 31 -

9am - 12pm

while exercising

- Insufficient stretching before exercise
- Exercising in the heat
- Muscle fatigue
- Dehydration
- Magnesium and/or potassium deficiency
- Calcium deficiency in pregnant women
- Malfunctioning nerves, which could be caused by a problem such as a spinal cord injury or pinched nerve in the neck or back

The treatment may be a process of trial and error to find what works best for your body. Hydration and electrolyte intake may be a good starting point. Magnesium and Calcium are also huge factors in the functioning of muscle contraction. The good news is that we carry a fantastic line of supplements here at Balanced Health and Sports Therapy including Cal-6+Mag and Magnesium (glycinate). If simply increasing water and electrolyte intake is not working to stop the muscle spasms then look in to adding magnesium to your diet and/or as a supplement. Foods high in Magnesium include: dark leafy greens (such as spinach, kale, swiss chard), nuts and seeds (squash, pumpkin, sesame seeds, almonds, cashews, brazil nuts), Fish (mackerel), beans and lentils, whole grains, avocados, bananas, dark chocolate.

When experiencing a muscle spasm, the tendency and reaction of the body is to tighten and hold your breath. **DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH!** Do your best to allow your breath to circulate smoothly and continuously to allow oxygen to reach the contracting muscles. Relax tension as much as possible and try to put the contracting muscle in to its stretched position.

## Up Coming Events



Join us at Balanced Health on **December 8th** for our **annual charity day bake sale**. We feature all natural, organic baked goods and Christmas treats including gluten free and vegan options. 100% of proceeds will go to charity.



We are still collecting any non-perishable food donations for the food bank. Anything helps!



## Treatments on Knee Osteoarthritis (KOA) with Acupuncture

By: Dr, Alex (Jiao) Huang, R.Ac., TCMD

Knee Osteoarthritis refers to a chronic disease characterized by pathologic changes of the knee joints. It is clinically manifested as pain, deformity, and rigidity. It is most commonly seen in elderly population. Acupuncture is an effective means of treating Knee Osteoarthritis. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, there are 5 ways which we can treat knee osteoarthritis, all of which are listed and described below.

### 1. Acupuncture

Needling the local points around knee joints helps to improve the blood circulation and the activities of muscles and tendons in order so that to manage the pain, stiffness and other symptoms. 2. Acupuncture with moxibustion

### 2. Moxibustion

Moxibustion is traditional Chinese Medicine Therapy which consists of burning dried mugwort on points on the body. Moxibustion can be used directly without acupuncture on Knee Osteoarthritis. Direct moxibustion creates warming to activate local points around the knee to solve swelling and stop pain. This therapy can easily be performed by an individual.

### 3. Acupuncture with moxibustion

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, coldness is considered to be one of the reasons causing Knee Osteoarthritis. People with Knee



### Massage Package

Purchase our massage package for \$450.00 and receive 6 one hour massages for the price of 5. (valued at \$540.00)

or

### Acupuncture Package

Purchase our acupuncture/ Traditional Chinese Medicine package for \$400.00 and receive 6 treatments with Dr. Alex for the price of 5. (valued at \$480.00)



Don't forget to pick up some Douglas Labs Ultra Preventive X

going through needles into joints helps get rid of the coldness in Knee joints and the pain and tightness will be managed.

#### 4. Acupuncture with electronic device

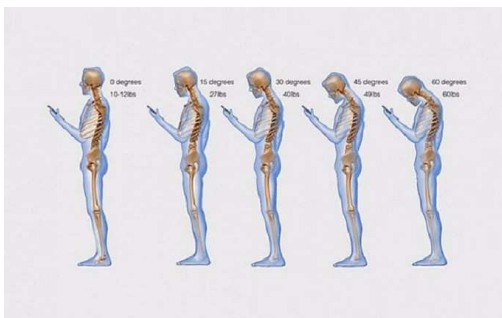
Acupuncture with low frequency pulse electronic device is another option to help Knee Osteoarthritis. Low frequency pulse electricity can activate local blood circulation of knee joints and muscles tendons as well. It works well on swelling and pain.

#### 5. Needle bleeding with cupping

Knee Osteoarthritis can cause local slow blood circulation and blood obstruction. Thus, needle bleeding with cupping can create negative pressure to suck the blood stasis in Knee joints out so that fresh blood can go to nourish the knee and improve Knee Osteoarthritis.

Overall, acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine are excellent tools in improving knee osteoarthritis, especially in conjunction with moderate exercise and avoidance of the cold.

(Copyright by Dr. Jiao Huang)



### Text Neck

By: Avni Harit Bsc., DC.

Text neck is a term used to describe the neck pain and damage sustained from looking down at your cell phone, tablet, or other wireless devices too frequently and for too long. As health care professionals, we are

purchase you will receive one **free bottle of Seroyal D-Mulsion 1000 vitamin-d**



Gluten-free Vanilla Bean Shortbread  
By Danielle Deutscher, RN

I developed this recipe for the whole foods Christmas bake sale we are hosting at Balanced Health on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

These cookies are a slightly healthier take on a holiday classic, but are still melt-in your mouth rich, and super easy to make!

They are suitable for most people with allergies or dietary restrictions, as they are gluten-free, nut-free, egg-free and can easily be made into

anterior/forward head tilt there is an extra force created on the cervical spine. For example, a 2014 study showed that as we flex our head forward, the force on the neck increases to 27 lbs with 30 degrees flexion, 40 lbs at 30 degrees and 60 lbs at 60 degrees. To put this into perspective, an average human head weights 10-12 lbs. Our bodies have the ability to adapt to this kind of force on a short term basis but, over time, this can create micro tears in the cervical musculature and ligaments leading to neck strains/sprains.

Let's look at what some of the symptoms associated with text neck:

- Upper back pain ranging from a chronic, nagging pain to sharp, severe upper back muscle spasms.
- Shoulder pain and tightness, possibly resulting in painful shoulder muscle spasm.
- If a cervical nerve becomes pinched, pain and possibly neurological symptoms can radiate down your arm and into your hand.

More recently we have had younger patients coming in complaining of neck pain. Due to the spike in technology, most children spent hours and hours on their computers, tablets and cellphones reading their favorite books, playing video games, or chatting with their friends. In the long term this can be detrimental to their spinal health creating cervical radiculopathy, cervical degenerative disc disease, cervical osteoarthritis and/or shoulder problems. The key to avoiding this kind of damage is education and prevention.

Children and adults would both benefit greatly from doing the following:

\*2 cups gluten-free all purpose flour mix (I used 1.5 cups of light all purpose gluten free flour with ½ cup buckwheat flour. Coconut flour or almond flour also work nicely in place of the buckwheat flour).

\*1 cup organic butter (preferably grass-fed for healthy fats) (To make this a vegan shortbread, you can substitute vegan butter such as Earth Balance, or virgin coconut oil).

\*½ cup organic powdered sugar (Wholesome Sweeteners makes a vegan powdered sugar—not filtered with bone char like many brands of icing sugar).

\*1 vanilla bean split lengthwise, seeds extracted (or sub 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract or ¼ tsp pure vanilla bean extract

\*Dark chocolate for dipping (if desired)

proper posture

- neck stretches to reduce overall tension
- strengthening exercises to help your neck support the weight of your head

To learn more about what you can do to prevent neck pain ask any one of us at Balanced Health & Sports Therapy! Our manual therapists can provide you with a proper assessment and treatment including home care activities to prevent you from experiencing text neck.

1. A Modern Spine Ailment: Text Neck. Shosany, S. 2015
2. [Surg Technol Int.](#) Hansraj, KK. 2014 Nov;25:277-9.

On another note, check out some interesting information about the effects of texting on the brain. <http://news.nationalpost.com/features/fatal-distraction-your-brain-on-texting>

(except chocolate) with your hands until a soft dough forms. Refrigerate for at least one hour. Shape dough into small balls, place on a cookie sheet and flatten using a lightly floured fork. Bake at 325F for approx. 25 mins or until edges of cookies are lightly browned. Once cooled, you can dip half your cookies into melted dark chocolate if desired. These cookies will freeze well.



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