

Our Goal is to Help You Meet Yours

Physical Therapy
Occupational Therapy
Speech Therapy
Sports Medicine
Aquatic Therapy
Prosthetics and Orthotics
Hand Therapy
Golf Program

Cert. Athletic Trainers
Psychology Services
Physician Services
Lymphedema Therapy
Work Rehabilitation
Job Site Evaluation
Functional Capacity
Evaluations

Schuylkill County's Only Accredited Outpatient Rehabilitation Center



300 Schuylkill Medical Plaza
Pottsville, PA 17901
570-621-9500
www.schuylkillrehab.com

WINTER 2009

Schuylkill Rehabilitation News

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD): "The Winter Blues"

Wednesday, January 21 @ 6:00 p.m.
Presenter: Dr. Allan P. Rodgers
Psychologist

Learn about ways to cope with the effects of this disorder.

CHAT ON THE ROAD: Carpal Tunnel and other Traumatic Hand Injuries

Wednesday, February 18, @ 6:30 p.m.
Presenter: Dr. Thomas B. Wheeler,
Orthopedic Surgeon and Louise Kalymun,
OTR/L

Learn about treatments and exercises when dealing with various traumatic hand injuries.

Cervical Headaches:

Monday, March 9 @ 6:00 p.m.
Presenter: Matthew Dambrosia, PT
Learn about different exercises and techniques to help with headaches.

Support Groups:

Stroke

1st Wednesday of the Month:
Jan. 7, Feb. 4, March 4 @ 12:00 (noon)

Fibromyalgia/Chronic Pain/Multiple Sclerosis

1st Wednesday of the Month:
Jan. 7, Feb. 4, March 4 @ 6:00 p.m.

Traumatic Brain Injury

2nd Wednesday of the Month:
Jan. 14, Feb. 11, March 11 @ 6:00 p.m.

Amputee

2nd Monday of the Month:
Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 9 @ 12:00 (noon)

**Support groups are open to all individuals, family, and caregivers of those experiencing Stroke/Fibro/Chronic Pain/MS/Brain

Injury/Amputation.

*ALL PROGRAMS HELD AT SCHUYLKILL REHABILITATION CENTER. FOR QUESTIONS, CALL (570) 621-9500. CHECK OUT OUR CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT:
www.schuylkillrehab.com

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

CHAT ON THE ROAD:

"Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and Other Traumatic Hand Injuries"

Dr. Thomas B. Wheeler, Orthopedic Surgeon

Louise G. Kalymun, OTR/L

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is the most common nerve compression of the *upper extremity*. CTS is the compression of the median nerve as the nerve crosses the wrist. The carpal tunnel is an inelastic structure at the wrist and it contains the median nerve and nine flexor tendons. If the median nerve is compressed at the wrist, symptoms that present are pain and decreased sensation of the hand. These hand symptoms are increased with repetitive hand and wrist motions. The symptoms are reported to be worse at night and often will awake people during hours of sleep. To decrease the symptoms, shaking the hand and wrist or placing the hand and wrist in a straight position can decrease the pain and improve sensation of the hand.

If the median nerve compression is moderate or severe and muscle atrophy and sensation is severely impaired, conservative treatment would not be effective. Conservative treatment for the mild Carpal Tunnel Syndrome compression can be successful. Conservative treatment for CTS is with a physician referral to Occupational Therapy (OT). The OT treatment of the CTS could consist of splinting for the hand and wrist in neutral position, nerve gliding and tendon gliding exercises, and modification and positioning of the hand and wrist during functional tasks. The conservative treatment of CTS in Occupational Therapy is successful if the nerve compression symptoms are decreased.

To learn more about CTS and other Traumatic Hand Injuries, Schuylkill Rehabilitation Center is hosting the next Community Health Awareness Talk (CHAT) on Wednesday, February 18, at 6:00 PM. This "hands-on" topic will be presented by Thomas B. Wheeler, M.D., Orthopedic Surgeon, and Louise G. Kalymun, Hand Therapy Coordinator, Schuylkill Rehabilitation Center. Reservations are not required to attend this free and informal evening "CHAT."



**REMEMBER ---- NEW LOGO
SAME GREAT NATIONALLY ACCREDITED REHABILITATION!!**

February Is American Heart Month

To assist you in spotting the signs of a heart attack, here is some valuable information from the American Heart Association: Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most heart attacks start slowly with mild pain or discomfort. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- ❖ Chest Discomfort-Most heart attacks invoke discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.
- ❖ Discomfort in other areas of the upper body-Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- ❖ Shortness of breath-may occur with or without chest discomfort.
- ❖ Other signs-may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.
- ❖ If you or someone you know experiences any of these symptoms, you should call 911 or get to the nearest emergency room immediately!!

For more information, visit the American Heart Association at www.americanheart.org

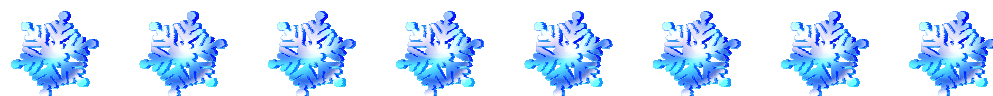
INFORMATION

Protect Your Back When Shoveling

With snowfall, comes a lot of extra exercise in the form of shoveling. Fifteen minutes of snow shoveling counts as moderate physical activity according to the 1996 Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health. We should get 30 minutes of exercise a day for good health, but this is not true if your back is not prepared. Here are a few suggestions to keep from having back pain during your winter shoveling:



1. Remember shoveling is exercise. Warm up your muscles by walking or marching in place. Warm muscles will work more efficiently and will be less likely to be injured.
2. Stretch both your arms, back, and legs before going outside. Take frequent breaks to stretch during shoveling.
3. Avoid caffeine or nicotine before shoveling. They are stimulants which may constrict blood vessels and increase heart rate.
4. Drink plenty of water. Dehydration is just as big an issue in cold weather as in summer.
5. Dress in layers. Wear a hat and cover your neck to decrease the body heat lost. Make sure clothing is loose fitting to allow you to move properly.
6. Wear boots with soles that will grip slippery surfaces to avoid falls. Also, when coming in from shoveling or walking in the snow, make sure you do not track in snow on floors that will melt and be a slipping hazard later.
7. Choose a shovel with a smaller blade which will require you to lift less snow, putting less strain on your body. More loads of light snow is better than fewer loads of heavier snow.
8. **Lift Correctly**, keep feet hip width apart, keep the shovel close. Bend at the knees not at the waist. Tighten stomach muscles as you lift the snow. Do not twist, move your feet to face the direction the snow will be going.
9. If possible, push snow out of the way rather than lifting and throwing it with the shovel.
10. Change your position so you are not lifting continuously to one side.
11. Clear snow as soon as it stops falling. It is lighter than snow that has melted slightly.
12. If it is a deep snow, shovel a few inches off the top at a time until you get to the ground. This helps avoid overloading the shovel.
13. Pace yourself and do not shovel too quickly. Doing anything too quickly can lead to poor body mechanics.
14. Don't hold your breath with any exercise. Your muscles need oxygen to work efficiently.
15. Use a snow blower, but be cautious.
16. Stop if you feel any pain.
17. And last but not least, **PRAY FOR SPRING!!**



Please refer to www.schuylkillrehab.com for a copy of our Bill of Rights, Privacy Statement, Code of Ethics, Mission Statement, and Outcome Reports. You can also complete satisfaction and strategic planning surveys. Also, please feel free to e-mail your ideas for upcoming education seminars or check the calendar for scheduled events.

INFORMATION (continued)

Seasonal Affective Disorder:

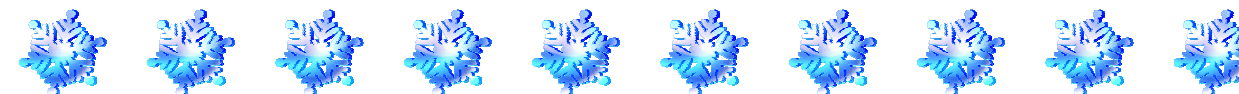
"The Winter Blues"

By: **Dr. Allan P. Rodgers**
Psychologist



Winter is here and for one or two people out of a hundred, winter gloom can take the form of clinical depression called Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). This disorder is defined as a depression that occurs every year beginning in the Fall and ending in the Spring. It is more than just "cabin fever." People are sadder, tired, anxious, and irritable. They have difficulty concentrating and become socially isolated.

The difference with SAD from "typical" depression is a tendency to overeat and excessively sleep versus in a typical depression where there is a loss of appetite and insomnia. Seasonal Affective Disorder appears to run in families and suggests a hereditary disposition to seasonal mood changes. Theories regarding SAD include excessive production of the hormone melatonin and disruption of the normal circadian rhythms (our internal biological clock).



Cervical Headaches

By: **Matthew Dambrosia, PT**



Headaches have many origins. Most people are unaware that one source of headaches can arise from neck problems. Symptoms or characteristics of cervical headaches include: pain at the base of skull, sides, or front of head; pain located on both or one side of the head; head pain after prolonged sitting, driving, or desk work; and pain experienced upon waking in the morning when no pain was experienced prior to falling asleep. Cervical headaches are usually experienced on and off and in episodes.

If you experience any of the characteristics listed above, you may be suffering from mechanical cervical headaches. Many individuals think the headaches they experience are a result of stress, work, or just being tired. In actuality, it could be a mechanical neck headache resulting from poor posture or body mechanics.

So, the next time you are dealing with a headache, just think about your posture when sitting or sleeping. Is your head forward when working at your computer, watching TV or driving home from work? One simple correction for this is sitting up straight and tucking your chin backwards to reduce stress on your neck.

Here, at Schuylkill Rehabilitation Center, we can help with recurrent cervical headaches. Using a mechanical assessment, we will provide advice in regards to proper posture and body mechanics along with exercises to decrease or abolish your headaches. Ultimately, adhering to a therapist's recommendations for treatment should aid in improving your quality of life.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday - Friday: 7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Saturday: 8:00 am - Noon