

Lumbar Neural Flossing and Hydration

Book review

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Introduction

As people age, life becomes somewhat more difficult. There may be vision problems (that can be corrected with glasses) there may be hearing difficulties (which could be due to wax on the tympanic membrane or the need for a hearing aid) and there could be weight problems (due to over-eating or lack of exercise or both). There are many other problems due to other body parts such as the heart, thyroid, lungs, kidneys and so forth. The purpose of this paper however is to focus on the back and sciatic nerve and to encourage at least some minimal exercise and to encourage further investigation as to how to maximize one's health. Obviously, this is not designed to eliminate consultation with a health care provider and this is not intended to be medical advice, but simply to share some minimal ideas for those who may want to enhance their overall functioning and address some issues.

Although the title of this piece is neural flossing, often it is referred to as nerve flossing and more information can be found here:

<https://www.healthline.com/health/nerve-flossing>

The above discusses procedures and provides guidelines for this approach.

For specific back and leg pain, readers can find additional information here:

<https://chiroup.com/blog/4-simple-nerve-flossing-exercises-to-help-resolve-back-leg-pain>

For specific neck pain here are two physiotherapists explaining:

<https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-infospace-032&ei=UTF-8&hsimp=yhs-032&hspart=infospace¶m1=vo085f7xdxobda3hfv2l7yz6&p=neural+nerve+flossing+shoulder&type=ud-c-us--s-p-bchmnwxn--exp-none--subid-none#id=2&vid=8708ab31a4a9444e604414d3c48a1583&action=click>

A global introduction with additional information is:

<https://www.yorkvillesportsmed.com/blog/ultimate-guide-to-nerve-flossing-and-how-it-can-help-you>

Stretching and Toning and Air Squats

For many people, the first thing they do in the morning is they stretch. Some people stretch their upper bodies- some bend slightly and some

simply get up and get ready for the day. There are some college and university courses that offer fundamental courses in stretching and doing some basic muscle toning. They begin with simple low impact and take into account the age of the student and attempt to accommodate.

Stretching and toning increases oxygen intake and get blood circulating and may even help with self-esteem as one begins to feel the impact of even small amounts of stretching and exercise however minimal. If some individuals have been sedentary for a long period of time, they may experience pain and thus should rest for a few days and gradually resume attempts.

Safety is very important and the first three letters of the alphabet are important-ABC- Always be careful! Having a chair or even better a person to assist and monitor is great. Balance is a key issue- we want to prevent falls and injury. For those who may have artificial knees or hips, consultation with the orthopedic surgeon is important and should be done before attempting air squats. "Air squats" are often referred to as the "king of exercises" as they seem to provide a good deal of benefit for those who engage in them regularly and consistency is important. Air squats are suggested for a number of people- some have low back pain, some in the hips, others in the legs or buttocks.

These "squats" seem to help strengthen the quadriceps and buttocks.

An excellent resource for those who are perhaps more visual learners than readers is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsE14aZgfOc>

This may provide a better incentive than reading this introductory article. Often this exercise is called or referred to as "deep knee bends" The person gradually slowly lowers themselves using the chair as a kind of "safety net" If you are a very cautious person a table would also provide support and guidance. For those with arthritis, one can do fewer squats or ½ squats and do them less frequently.

If one feels insecure about doing "deep knee bends" they can always revert to perhaps the simplest easiest way of getting some exercise and that is walking. Simple walking get oxygen flowing and the blood circulating and if there is a local mall, then there is some safety. One has to be careful, even walking on the grass- as there may be uneven surfaces, causing one to trip or fall. The basic idea is to remain happy and healthy into your senior years.



Hydration

As people age, they often forget to partake of one of the most important things relevant to the human body and that is water. Next to blood, water may be one of the most important things to imbibe in on a daily basis. Chronic dehydration can be problematic. All too often people drink or overindulge in coffee- but coffee is not water but is often a diuretic. And in the current zeitgeist, people seem to flock to Starbucks and other places for a variety of caffeine laden drinks. Certainly, this may help them with their “get up and go” in the morning and may also provide some social interaction. But coffee is not water, and often people put sugar and sugar substitutes and cream and milk into their coffee, and sugar of course could lead to obesity- and we do not want that! However, it is noted that dehydration can lead to a number of concerns- specifically poor circulation, and in some instances cramping and according to some experts, decreased cardiac output. When individuals do not consistently partake of an adequate amount of water, dehydration may occur and this could be difficult or hard on the kidneys. For athletes, lack of water can result in poor performance, and the wise athletes always take additional water or Gatorade or some other supplement. If injured a lack of water can slow the healing process and recovery from those pesky injuries that we all seem to incur on occasion.

Now those with kidney difficulties should of course consult with their primary care physician or health care provider and those with any type of heart failure should also have a long discussion with their cardiologist or doctor. For some individuals, for whatever medical reason, the patient is on “limited water intake” and thus they should be following “doctor’s orders” very exactly and precisely and also understand the reasoning as to why these orders were suggested and the logic behind them.

In general, people should take their body weight into consideration. A female weighing 100 pounds is different than a male weighing 200 pounds. A global overall suggestion is to look at your body weight and divide by 2 and this reflects the amount of ounces that one should consume or take on a daily basis. Coffee as indicated earlier- does not count as water. Coffee in general contains caffeine and there are other beverages such as tea, or soda or beer that are not good old H₂O or water. Some so-called experts are very clear on this point that the only thing that counts as water, is water- and most stores nowadays have a vast array of water that can be purchased and taken with one to work or to the gym.

Some, I repeat, some individuals may have some type of reaction to an increase in water intake such as a headache so one can gradually increase or titrate their intake to a manageable level. However, consistency is important. One can check their calendar and begin on the first of the month and reflect at the end of the month as to how they feel- or follow up after a month with their primary care physician.

Some possible benefits of adequate hydration include: slightly more

energy (who does not want more energy in this hectic world?) and improved circulation and perhaps less muscle tension. There may obviously be an increase in urination, because of course, you are taking in or water. Remember that soda and diet soda are not water and the sugar in most soft drinks can exacerbate your pain- if you are in pain due to injury or some other condition. Some individuals really feel that they need a “cup of joe” to function in the morning and that is okay but they need to offset the intake of strong coffee with a slight increase in water.

Water, like blood, is a major part of the human body. We want to prevent dehydration, and especially athletes and those who work out and go to the gym on a frequent basis need to heed the importance of water in their lives. Lack of water can also impact the skin.

Lastly, but not least, diet is important and relevant. What one consumes on a daily basis can be helpful or harmful. It can be protein-laden or void of vitamins, nutrients and minerals. What one consumes can provide energy or constipation. There are so many diets and opinions out there that all one can say is work with a skilled nutritionist or dietician for your age, sex and situation (working vs retired, medical vs non-medical) There are many, many medical conditions and medications that are involved and thus, here again, comes a disclaimer- this article is not medical advice but simply a discussion and global information.

There are a number of books available for those who want to read about improving their health and enhancing the function of their human body. Crowley and Lodge [1] have a book entitled “Younger Next Year” which encourages individuals to continue to be aware of their health as they age. Wiley [2] has a book specifically for those with arthritis in its many forms. Phillips and D’Orso [3] have a text that promotes a regimen of 12 weeks to enhance physical and mental strength. As with almost all books nowadays, the book is informational and educational and is not medical guidance or assistance or advice.

For those recovering from surgery or some traumatic event that may have required hospitalization, obviously your physician and physical therapist will work together and with you for recovery. Some of the information in this article will be relevant, some not. This is a brief introduction to two realms -water/hydration and neural flossing. Some additional resources are provided for further study.

References

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