

ProMet Quarterly



FREE

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ProMet & Friends Help Feed Hungry this Holiday Season



As part of our continued effort to support our community, ProMet, with the help of our patients and friends, will be making a donation to *City Harvest* to help feed New York City's hungry this holiday season. The donation effort was the idea of ProMet's Patient Care Coordinator, Lauren. After her suggestion that we make a company-wide effort for a good cause, we researched organizations which allocate the majority of donated monies toward programs. We ultimately settled on *City Harvest*, an organization which is largely run by volunteers, rescues food which would otherwise go to waste and allocates 91 cents from every dollar donated towards charitable programs. ProMet has pledged to match our patients' and friends' donations up to \$500. If you want to support our effort, stop by one of our offices to make a donation of your choice. We will give you a snowflake and display it at our offices as part of our holiday decorations. Thank you!

Avoid Back Injury this Snow Season

The arrival of winter often means an onslaught of snow storms for the northeast. Although the first snowfall is a beautiful sight, eventually all that snow must be removed to make way for the hustle and bustle of the city. While most people view snow shoveling as an annoying chore, it is actually a strenuous activity and must be treated as such. Most people are not aware that snow shoveling puts them at risk for injury. In order to prevent injury, snow shoveling should be approached like any other form of exercise. If the proper precautions are taken, snow shoveling can actually be a satisfying way to burn off those extra calories acquired over the holidays.

The most common forms of injury from snow shoveling are muscle sprains and strains and, sometimes, more serious injuries of the back such as: disc damage and spinal fractures. These injuries can occur due to stress put on the spine while shoveling, or from slip and fall accidents while shoveling. Dr. Brad Coffiner from Cornell University's department of Ergonomics has identified the L5/S1 disc as the weakest link in the spine. "The most severe injuries and pain are likely to occur in the back region," informs Dr. Coffiner. There are three important factors in avoiding injury caused by shoveling snow: 1) Appropriate



Photo by: www.consumrreports.org

Proper technique is important for avoiding injury when shoveling snow.

ate preparation prior to shoveling, 2) Selecting the right shovel and 3) Using the proper technique while shoveling. If you remember the following tips next time snowfall blankets our neighborhood, you will be better prepared to avoid back injury or pain.

PREPARATION

Besides making sure you wear the right coat, hat and gloves to

keep you warm while you're out in the bitter cold shoveling snow, it is just as important to wear the appropriate footwear. While snow shoveling, the boots you wear shouldn't only keep your feet nice and toasty, more importantly, they should give you good traction so that you can avoid injuries caused by slips and falls. To help give you even more traction while shoveling over ice or tightly packed snow, make sure to spread salt or sand over...

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Continuing Education for PTs

New York State Department of Education requires that all Physical Therapists complete a minimum of 36 continuing education hours during every 3 year license renewal period. Not only is continuing education required by the state, but all the members of our professional staff place great value on acquiring new skills and knowledge and keeping up-to-date with new research in the field

of physical therapy. In a continued effort to maintain these values and remain current on their practice, our professional staff recently attended two continuing education programs where they learned about diagnosing from the orthopaedist's point of view and had the opportunity to learn about and practice new joint mobilization techniques.

In late October 2011, the

owners and co-founders of ProMet, Ryan Martin, DPT and Julian Samodulski, DPT as well as staff physical therapist, Helen Gonzalez, MSPT, attended the *3rd Annual Orthopaedics in Primary Care Medicine: Contemporary Advancements & Treatments* through Winthrop University Hospital's Continuing Medical Education Program.

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Keep Arthritis Pain at Bay

“The ultimate goal with arthritis patients is proper education and functional improvement for everyday activity.”

As fall comes to an end and winter brings with it its frigid temperatures, many folks who suffer from arthritic conditions tend to complain of increased pain in their joints. Arthritis patients everywhere often feel that colder, wetter weather has a negative effect on their arthritis. Some research has been done and scientists at John Hopkins University have gotten mixed results from their studies, but, overall, the correlation between weather and arthritis pain is weak.

One thing we know for certain is that physical therapy can help address the symptoms most commonly associated with arthritis—joint pain and stiffness. The goal of physical therapy for someone with arthritis is to get the patient to a point where she can perform the activities of daily living with minimal difficulty or pain. Andrew Poon, DPT, staff physi-

cal therapist at ProMet’s Kew Gardens office, says, “The ultimate goal with arthritis patients is proper education and functional improvement for everyday activity.”

A typical physical therapy program for an arthritis patient will include modalities such as heat and ice, flexibility training and strengthening exercises for the muscles supporting the affected joint(s). Moist heat helps relax the muscles around the joint and loosen them up in preparation for exercise. Ice helps reduce inflammation in the joint which is the cause of pain and stiffness. Flexibility and strengthening will help support weak joints and make life more manageable for the patient. This program is designed to decrease pain and inflammation and increase range of motion. Good range of motion will help the patient maintain an independent lifestyle and be able to per-

form daily tasks with little difficulty.

Andrew stresses the importance of educating the patient about her condition and symptoms. Treating the patient and increasing flexibility and strength is very important to her quality of life, but it is just as important to educate the patient so that she understands her condition and what to do to avoid pain and stiffness. “It is important to get the patient independent with icing. Icing is important for reducing inflammation, the major cause of pain and stiffness in patients with arthritis,” says Andrew.

For patients with arthritis, physical therapy is a non-evasive alternative to joint replacement surgery. It is not always possible, but many times the right physical therapy treatment plan can help keep a patient out of the operating room.

Avoid Injury this Snow Season, Cont. from Front Page

the area you will be shoveling. This, combined with proper footwear, should significantly reduce your risk of slip and fall accidents which are largely associated with back and hip injuries.

Another important part of preparation for snow shoveling is warming-up. Just like any other physically strenuous activity, stretching and warming-up your muscles beforehand reduces the likelihood of suffering from muscle strain or sprain. Think of snow shoveling as you would a workout. You wouldn’t workout with cold, tight muscles, so you shouldn’t snow shovel with cold, tight muscles either. Make sure you are well hydrated before you begin shoveling and stay hydrated throughout the activity.

SHOVEL SELECTION

Most people don’t give much thought to the type of shovel they purchase for shoveling snow. The majority of us go to our neighborhood hardware store and grab whatever shovel is on display or on sale. In reality, the type of shovel you use has a lot to do with your risk of injury while shoveling. Factors such as the shape, material, weight, size and function of the shovel are all important for determining risk of injury.

Ergonomic shovels, or shovels that are curved, reduce the stress on the spine by having you keep your back straighter while shoveling as

compared to straight shovels. Likewise, shovels that are meant for pushing rather than lifting, put less stress on the spine. If you chose a shovel with a plastic versus a metal blade, each load will be lighter, therefore putting less stress on your back. Along the same lines, if you purchase a shovel with a smaller blade, each load will be smaller and weigh less. Purchasing the right shovel will certainly reduce your risk of suffering from unnecessary injury.

TECHNIQUE

Technique is not something people associate with snow shoveling. Most people just dig, swing and repeat. The wrong technique, such as twisting your back to dump the snow, has a high probability of causing back pain or injury. There is such a thing as proper snow shoveling technique and if you practice the following tips, you will reduce your risk of injury significantly. Beginning with the basics, hand placement on the shovel, like in golf, is an important factor in avoiding injury. It is best not to grip the shovel with your hands too close together. If you hold the shovel with some distance between your hands, you will have more leverage and the load of snow will be easier to lift.

Proper posture is a key factor in avoiding back pain and injury. Always try to maintain the natural curvature of your spine while you shovel. Make sure to stand with your feet shoulder width apart to help evenly

distribute the weight of your body. Keep the shovel close to your body and bend at the knees, not the waist, when digging into the snow. As you lift the snow, you should make sure to lift with your legs instead of your back and tighten your abdominal muscles to help you.

One of the worst things you can do is twist the body while shoveling snow. Twisting the spine, especially while carrying the extra weight of the snow, can cause sprains, strains and even severe injuries such as disc damage and spinal fractures. It is not advisable to twist the body to dump snow. Just as bad as twisting the body is swinging a shovelful of snow over your shoulder. Instead, dump the snow in front of you. If dumping the snow in front of you is not an option, turn your body to the side using your legs to dump snow to the side.

If you try to implement the suggestions for snow shoveling above, you will significantly reduce your risk of injury. Also, remember to scoop small amounts of snow at a time and to take breaks in between so that you don’t overexert yourself. Keep in mind that snow shoveling is not advisable for those who have a history of heart disease/attack, smokers and the elderly as well as those with high blood pressure, high cholesterol and a history of back problems. If you are unsure of your readiness, seek advice from your primary care provider before heading out to clear the driveway.

“The wrong technique, such as twisting your back to dump the snow, has a high probability of causing back pain or injury.”

ProMet Fosters Future Therapists

Here at ProMet, we are not only dedicated to providing the best quality of care to our patients, but also to helping shape the future generation of Physical Therapists. From opening our doors to volunteers to hosting DPT students for their clinical affiliations, ProMet takes pride in helping educate future therapists and giving those who are curious about the profession an opportunity to experience it firsthand. Our involvement in the future generation of PTs is most evident in-house. All of the Physical Therapist Aides on the ProMet team are on track (albeit, at different stages) to becoming Physical Therapists. Three of our seven PT Aides are currently in the process of applying to DPT school. If you are a patient of ProMet, you have most likely worked with one of our soon-to-be PTs.

Giusi, who began her experience at ProMet as a volunteer at our Middle Village office, recently completed and submitted all her applications to DPT schools across the city; including Long Island University-Brooklyn Campus, Hunter College, New York Institute of Technology, SUNY Downstate, Stony Brook University and Touro College, but is hopeful that she will be accepted to Hunter College, her top choice. She prefers Hunter because, "It offers a great DPT program with a special emphasis on research and is very affordable." Giusi also has an appreciation for LIU because she has seen firsthand the thorough foundation our founders and staff therapists received from their DPT studies there.

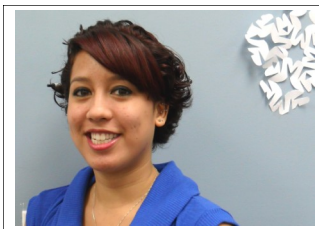
Giusi, who is pursuing a DPT as her second career, was first introduced to PT when her mother received a total knee replacement. "After speaking to her PT, I immediately became interested in the field because I saw what a difference PT can make and I truly enjoy helping people," recalls Giusi. When asked about her experience at ProMet, Giusi is



Giusi, PT Aide, Pilates Instructor and future DPT.

thankful that ProMet has given her the opportunity to truly experience the PT world and to learn a lot from PTs and patients alike. Giusi feels that PT is beneficial to both the patient and the therapist. "I invested eight years of my life in a previous career and I have no regret switching to PT," adds Giusi.

Rosa, who has been a PT Aide at ProMet since early 2011, is also in the PT school application process. Rosa recently graduated with a bachelors degree in Psychology from Hunter College after receiving an associates degree in Health Sciences at Queensborough Community College. Rosa has also applied to some of the most reputable DPT programs in NYC. These include Long Island University, New York Institute of Technology, Stony Brook University, New York University and Touro College. Rosa's top picks are Stony Brook for their great facility and program and LIU for their program, faculty and all that she

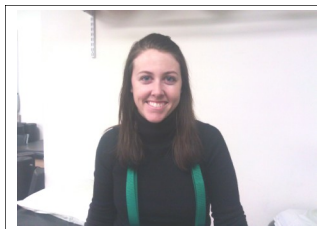


Rosa, a PT Aide at our Kew Gardens office and future DPT.

has learned from the LIU alumni who make up our PT staff.

Rosa was inspired to become a Physical Therapist after a family member close to her received PT for the treatment of a life changing injury. Her grandmother went out to run an errand and slipped and fell on a patch of un-shoveled snow. The fall resulted in an injured ankle and hip which required Rosa's grandmother to get around with the assistance of a walker. Rosa watched her grandmother progress with Physical Therapy; from a walker to a cane and back to ambulating unassisted. "After watching my grandmother improve and, finally, fully recover and resume her life, I realized that I want to have that type of impact on someone's life," says Rosa. She hopes to, one day, open her own private practice.

Rachel, the newest addition to the ProMet team, is a California native who is hoping to get into a DPT program on the East Coast. Be-



Rachel, a PT Aide at our Middle Village office and future DPT.

fore coming to ProMet, Rachel received a bachelors degree from Lafayette College in the self-designed major *Human Health in African Societies*. Now, she has applied to some of the country's finest schools for her graduate studies—Boston University, New York University, Columbia University and Duke University. Rachel is looking forward to an acceptance letter from Duke, her top pick, for their excellent program and hopes to one day bring Physical Therapy to parts of the world that don't have the resources.

As a tennis player, Rachel injured her shoulder. This athletic injury was Rachel's introduction to Physical Therapy. She received rehabilitation for the injured shoulder and became attracted to PT. She was a patient of Physical Therapy twice more for a foot injury and then a spinal injury and was impressed at how much PT helped improve her condition. The combination of her experience as a patient of Physical Therapy, her love of sports and her dedication to helping people encouraged Rachel to seek a DPT. As a PT Aide at ProMet, Rachel has had the opportunity to work one-on-one with Helen Gonzalez, MSPT and learn the specifics about certain treatments and the particular reasons for patients' treatment plans. "I truly enjoy the opportunities I have had at ProMet, especially to sit in on patients' evaluations," says Rachel.

Founders of ProMet, Ryan Martin, DPT and Julian Samodulski, DPT are proud and supportive of the dedication our PT Aides have towards the profession of Physical Therapy. When ProMet hires new PT Aides, we make sure they are, not only looking for a job, but seeking to gain experience or exposure in PT to help with their future professional goals. The ProMet team wishes Giusi, Rosa and Rachel the best of luck with DPT school and with all their future educational and professional endeavors!

"I invested eight years of my life in a previous career and I have no regret switching to Physical Therapy."

~Giusi

"After watching my grandmother improve and, finally, fully recover and resume her life, I realized that I want to have that type of impact on someone's life."

~ Rosa

"I truly enjoy the opportunities I have had at ProMet, especially to sit in on patients' evaluations."

~ Rachel

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Try the ProMet Approach!



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ProMet Quarterly! If you have
any questions, comments,
ideas or concerns, please
contact us at

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The ProMet Approach

ProMet PT offers a fresh new look as compared to the ordinary, "run-of-the-mill" physical therapy clinics throughout the area. We don't just help alleviate your symptoms- we get to the source of your problem and eliminate them. In turn, you will learn about what caused your injury or symptoms and what to do to prevent them from re-occurring. Our physical therapists are skilled in manual techniques (soft tissue massage, METs, joint mobilizations, etc.), experts in exercise prescription and are dedicated to implementing innovative ideas. With new, state-of-the-art rehabilitation equipment, a personal atmosphere and an "individualist" approach to care, ProMet PT's quality is unmatched with the competition. Every patient's rehabilitation program is specifically designed to meet the distinct needs of that individual.

Our Mission

ProMet Physical Therapy, P.C. is an established physical therapist-owned practice, founded with the purpose of serving the individual within the community while utilizing the highest quality of care available. Quality of care demands maintaining the utmost professionalism, implementing evidence based practice and maximizing rehabilitation potential. These are the criterion set forth by the profession of Physical therapy and the foundation on which ProMet PT was built.

About the Founders

The owners and operators of the practice are New York State licensed Doctors of Physical Therapy. Combined, they have over 16 years of experience in the healthcare profession as well as extensive history with various populations of people who utilize physical therapy; including amateur and professional athletes, marathon runners, corporate executives and the geriatric community. They are both active members of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA).

Continuing Education for PTs

The course at Winthrop University Hospital covered differential diagnosis and treatment of conditions of the shoulder, knee, foot & ankle, osteoarthritis, fractures, neck & back pain and the use of radiological tests when diagnosing. The course was given as a series of lectures by some of the most reputable names in orthopaedics including, friend of ProMet, Dr. Marc Grossman, Chief of Sports Medicine at Winthrop University Hospital. Dr. Grossman gave a lecture on differential diagnosis and treatment of shoulder conditions including arthroscopy—one of his specialties. There were other lectures from multiple orthopaedic surgeons covering current techniques in arthroscopy and physical evaluations v. imaging diagnoses. Through this symposium our therapists gained a better understanding of how orthopaedic surgeon use different diagnostic tools and why they implement certain treatment options.

A couple weeks later, in November, most of our professional staff attended a course on the Mulligan Concept. The Mulligan Concept is a method of treatment in which there is a simultaneous application of mobilizations applied by the therapist and active movements done by the patient.

The concept was developed by Brian R. Mulligan, FNZSP of New Zealand in 1985.

The course, *Upper Quarter: Spinal & Peripheral Manual Therapy Treatment Techniques of Brian R. Mulligan*, covered "Mobilization with Movement," which is the core of the Mulligan Concept. Unlike the course at Winthrop University Hospital, this course was a hands-on experience offering therapists the opportunity to practice. Our Physical Therapists had the opportunity to practice specific mobilizations on each other after learning about the specific techniques involved with each mobilization. The course covered "Mobilizations with Movement" for the upper body and its extremities: including mobilizations for fingers, carpal, wrists, elbows, shoulders and cervical spine. Our team found interest in the technical specificity of each mobilization. Helen Gonzalez, MSPT, member of our professional staff is seeking certification in the Mulligan technique.

Our professional staff plans to continue expanding their knowledge base and many on our staff hope to acquire Orthopedic and other specializations in the future.

New Year, New Coverage

Patients, please be aware that most insurance policies reset in the new year. Private policies which have an effective date of January and all Medicare policies will reset their benefits and deductibles beginning January 1, 2012. Please note that you, the patient, are fully responsible for meeting the new deductible. Our staff will re-verify all active patients' policies and inform those who's policy benefits have changed. We will also inform you if you have a deductible. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact one of our Patient Care Coordinators at (718) 554-6610 or (718) 880-2385.

Patient Data Forms go Digital

As all of our patients know, a first visit to ProMet begins with completing several patient data forms. We at ProMet are always trying to think of different ways to make the intake process more efficient and more convenient for patients. Now, you can find all of our patient data forms on the web! They are in Fillable PDF format—you can type in your information and print them out in the comfort of your own home. Then, just bring them in with you on your first visit. For access to our forms visit www.prometpt.com and click on "Patient Resources" at the bottom of the navigation bar.



Happy Holidays & Healthy New Year from your Friends at Pro-Met!

