

# LOHI PHYSICAL THERAPY

*Newsletter*

December 2019



## JOINT WELLNESS

This program has been designed to provide you the opportunity to learn and experience movement and hands-on techniques to change your joint and tissue mobility. p. 03

## AVOIDABLE HAND INJURIES

Completely avoidable hand injuries: while walking the dog and in the kitchen. Just as we choose to eat right or exercise more, we need to be proactive or “smart” about avoiding injury to our hands when injury is avoidable. p. 02

## GOLF WELL

Find out what muscle imbalances or mobility restrictions are impeding your progress. The Titleist Performance Institute (TPI) screening can identify movement patterns that show up in your golf swing. You'll get specific exercises and drills you can use to have your best season in 2020. p. 03

## TRAINING FOR SKI/BOARD SEASON:

HOW TO PREVENT INJURY AND EXTEND YOUR SEASON

*by Rebecca Mohrbacher, PT, DPT*

When preparing for the upcoming ski season, a couple of wishes come to mind such as a deep snow base, short lift lines and a long season. We can't control the weather or the crowds, but we can control how our body is prepared to perform from November until April (... or June).

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# COMPLETELY AVOIDABLE HAND INJURIES: WHILE WALKING THE DOG AND IN THE KITCHEN

*by Karen Voss, OTR/L, CHT, FOC*

I read the following comment while reading information from the hand therapy blog on the American Society of Hand Therapy (ASHT) website. Hand surgeon John M. Erickson, MD provided tips for prevention of hand injuries, but I especially liked this comment he offered.

*“I will prevent disease whenever I can, for prevention is preferable to cure” — Hippocratic Oath*

This oath can apply to our daily lives. Some injuries are avoidable.

Hands can be especially vulnerable to injury and happen quickly. I have watched individuals go through significant pain and discomfort due to a sudden injury that occurred doing simple daily tasks. Read on for examples of injuries that are avoidable.

**First of all; Denver loves Dogs!** A report from the ASHT on frequent causes of Finger Fractures, Dislocations, and Traumatic Amputations are due to holding a dog leash wrapped around the fingers. It is reported that in one year there were more than 16,000 leash-related injuries treated in American emergency rooms, and at least 20% of those involved fingers. Finger joints are susceptible to violent twist and pull if your dog jerks suddenly while the leash is wrapped around your fingers. Due to the mechanism of the injury, the finger fracture is often displaced due to a quick twist and pull. Often ligaments are torn or the joint can dislocate in conjunction with this injury. If wrapping the leash around digits and using a retractable leash, a digit can be cut severely or suffer a “burn” caused by a fast jerk on the nylon cord part of this type of leash. If wrapped snugly around a digit, a traumatic digit amputation can occur.

## **“Leash” injuries are avoidable.**

1. Injuries happen in a split second, be attentive to your dog. Good training for you and your dog will result in a safer and more pleasant experience. Keep your dog on a short leash and avoid wrapping any part of the leash around your fingers.
2. Avoid becoming distracted during the walk. Train your dog to sit and wait while you check messages on your phone or answer a message. Replace the phone in your pocket.
3. Keep both hands available when walking your dog. Avoid occupying one hand with a water bottle, coffee cup or cell phone while the other has to manage your dog single-handedly.

Your dog may suddenly become excited by another dog, person, rabbit, or squirrel and “ouch”. Suddenly one quick yank and your days ahead change to an urgent care visit, hand specialist visit, hand therapist multiple visits and potential for a digit or hand that never is quite the same in function.

**In the kitchen:** Avocado cutting injuries are very common because of placing the avocado in the palm and cutting from top down or attempting to stab the pit to remove it.

Don't risk it, place the avocado on a cutting board with your open hand on top of it so you're pressing down on it a bit. Then take the knife and cut into the side of the fruit, spinning it gently to make a 360-degree cut around the pit. Turn the avocado 90 degrees to and cut it again so you have quarters. It will then be easy to manually split the quarters off the pit. You can scoop out the fruit.

The avocado is one example in which people may use a knife to cut or “stab” at the food. Another example is stabbing potatoes prior to baking. The potato does not need the air holes after it has been scrubbed prior to baking. When you are in the kitchen, preparing food, take a moment to think about safe use with a knife.

## **Here are a few additional tips regarding ways to avoid cuts:**

- Do not hold a fruit or vegetable in the palm of your hand while cutting it from the top and toward your palm. Use a cutting board.
- Place sharp knives and forks facing down in the dishwasher.
- Avoid leaving knives in a basin of soapy water. Wash off immediately and place face down to dry.
- Clean up any broken glass or ceramic immediately. Do not use your hands.
- Wrap broken glass and sharp objects including metal can lids carefully with newspaper before disposing of them in a garbage bag.

Hopefully this brief article about unfortunate hand injuries will guide you in your daily routine to avoid an injury to your hands or digits. Life's mishaps can still occur and we cannot always avoid them. “Stuff happens”.

Get out, enjoy life, and keep alert and injury free as much as possible.



## JOINT WELLNESS

Joint Wellness 3 Session Program 2020:  
 Wednesdays, January 8th, 15th, and 22nd.  
 Time: 6:00pm.  
 Duration: 45 minute guided instruction.  
 Cost: \$90.

- You will experience changes in your joint and tissue mobility. Learn techniques you can integrate with any current exercise program including any stretching or strengthening program you are already doing. This program is based on skills learned as a clinician working with orthopedic issues, neuromotor reeducation, sensorimotor issues, myofascial structure and function relationships in the body.
- The program involves floor activities with gravity to change your alignment and movement away from gravity to tone your muscles. You will address every major joint in your body including toes, ankles, knees, hips, back, shoulder, neck, elbow, wrist and digits.
- For each session, plan on a 45 minute guided instruction followed by 10 minutes for review and to answer questions.
- Electronic handouts provided.

## GOLF WELL

Winter is the best time to work on your most important golf equipment- your body!

Come in and find out what muscle imbalances or mobility restrictions are impeding your progress. The Titleist Performance Institute (TPI) screening can identify movement patterns that show up in your golf swing. You'll get specific exercises and drills you can use to have your best season in 2020.

If you're injured, we can find out the cause of your injury, and give you more specific physical therapy treatment. Don't let an injury interfere with your golf!

Contact Peter Szymanski, IOC, CFMT, TPI-M2 for more information, or to schedule an appointment.



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# TRAINING FOR SKI/BOARD SEASON: HOW TO PREVENT INJURY AND EXTEND YOUR SEASON

*by Rebecca Mohrbacher, PT, DPT*

When preparing for the upcoming ski season, a couple of wishes come to mind such as a deep snow base, short lift lines and a long season. We can't control the weather or the crowds, but we can control how our body is prepared to perform from November until April (... or June).

Whether you are returning to the slopes after an injury or motivated to prevent an injury, there are a couple of training points to focus on during your pre-season and during season training. Core performance is one of these key training points.

Core performance plays an important role in athletic performance across athletes and sports. In order to effectively train core performance it is helpful to understand the principles and anatomy.

**Anatomy of our core:** Our core is comprised of the abdominal muscles in the front, oblique muscles along the side, muscles along the spine in the back, muscles of the buttocks (glutes), the diaphragm and the pelvic floor muscles. For our core to perform effectively during our sport and preventing injury we must train each of these muscle groups.

**Principles of core performance:** To efficiently train core performance we should focus on two principles: stability and mobility. These two principles can be further broken down to include balanced activation, posture, endurance, and strength.

We need a baseline strength for performance that takes into account all muscles of the core. However, a common disconnect is the presence of strength but poor activation. Ideal activation requires proper timing of muscles engaging and balanced sequencing between muscle groups. For example our buttock and gluteal muscles can be strong, but if we don't activate them during dynamic activities or in coordination with the core, our system becomes vulnerable to overload, fatigue and injury.

To elaborate further, when our core muscles are working in coordination, we benefit from controlled functional movements which result from the prevention of excessive movement. Too much movement leads to instability and potential injury.

Posture impacts the efficiency of our muscle use. An efficient posture requires minimal muscle activation at rest but is dispersed throughout the entire core (reference above anatomy to see all muscles that should be involved during efficient posture). With an efficient posture we do not risk over working certain muscle groups. For example, postures that have excessive low back curve, also known as lordosis, quickly fatigue the muscles along the back of the spine (extensors muscles), leaving our low back vulnerable to injury.

Additionally, when we have an efficient posture our alignment facilitates automatic core engagement (ACE). Our posture should encourage relaxation, avoiding fatigue, not holding patterns or prolonged bracing.

**If:**

- Our posture is efficient.
- Our activation includes appropriate load to all muscles of the core.
- We have a baseline of strength reserve and endurance.

**Then:**

- We can effectively train our stability and controlled mobility and improve our core performance.

## QUICK SPLIT STANCE TRANSITIONS WITH RESISTANCE:

1. Grab your resistance band or cord with both hands.
2. Position hands in front of midline. You can vary the height from chest to belly button, but maintain midline orientation.
3. Straighten your elbows so your arm is fully extended, you should feel an automatic core activation (front to back).
4. Position legs in a split or staggered stance.
5. Begin by quickly alternating legs back and forth for 30 seconds.

Focus on keeping your hands in midline, not allowing for the band to rotate your hands and therefore your trunk. You can vary the depth of your split stance, progressing into a deeper lunge or vary the height of the resistance band.

Repeat by positioning yourself so the band is pulling from the opposite side.



WHEN PRACTICING THESE EXERCISES, CONSIDER YOUR POSTURE THROUGHOUT AND HOW YOUR ENTIRE CORE IS WORKING.

## FUNCTIONAL SQUAT:

Begin in an athletic stance. Slowly bend your knees, while maintaining your back in alignment. Let your bottom move back and toward the floor.

Then: **push, push, push** your feet into the ground as you go up and down.

- Practice with your feet parallel, as well as staggered.
- Practice with and without the stick behind you.
- You should be able to do this for at least 3-5 minutes.



WANT TO SEE THE EXERCISES DEMONSTRATED LIVE?  
CLICK HERE.