

Voyage au Mont-Tremblant

By Ryan Marrin – Registered Physiotherapist at S.O.S. Physiotherapy Northfield

Bonjour mes amis! Don't worry, you do not have to speak French to be able to read this article. I am just excited to share with you my trip to Mont-Tremblant and to practice some of my new French skills! Since my partner is a High School French teacher I have recently committed to learning a second language using Duolingo so I can keep up! With this in mind, we decided to plan a trip to Mont-Tremblant in Montréal, Québec to hit the slopes and enjoy the mountain village right after New Year's. I would love to share some of the highlights of our trip and give you some recommendations on places to go if you decide to check it out for yourself!

If you're a skier or a snowboarder then it is important to know that the slopes at Mont-Tremblant are excellent! The mountain is 875 meters high, which is quite a bit higher compared to Blue Mountain which is only 450 meters at its highest point. There are 102 routes featuring a few very long, scenic beginner level green circles. Both my partner and I had not been on a mountain in a number of years so we were thankful that we had an opportunity to take our time and practice on some easier paths. We had an excellent full day of snowboarding and skiing and cannot wait to go back even though we were both a tad sore the next day!

The village is wonderful at Mont-Tremblant as well. There are many restaurants and shops to visit so you are never bored or looking for something to do. We had great meals at the restaurants Le G.C. and Resto-Bar Le Shack and gained a few calories (no regrets!) after visiting Chocolato for dessert. We

also really enjoyed a store called Maison Fayard, which sells cured meats and Foies Gras. It was some of the best French charcuterie we have ever had!

However, easily the best part of our trip was visiting the Scandinave Thermal Spa which was just up the road from the mountain. Our sore muscles were very thankful to be treated to a full day of outdoor hot tubs, saunas and steam rooms followed by a quick cold plunge and some relaxation with guided meditations. For those who are extra brave, they even sometimes allow access to the river if you want to take a dip in 1 degree water! You could not have paid me enough money to do that but my partner braved the freezing waters and could not have been more proud!

All in all, we thoroughly enjoyed our little trip to Mont-Tremblant. The people and staff at every place we visited were very friendly and welcoming and gave me a few opportunities to practice my French. I hope you decide to take a trip there soon if you have never been and I leave you with a tip: The most important phrase that you might want to know is "Je voudrais un verre de vin rouge" (I would like a glass of red wine!). Chin-Chin!

Merci et à bientôt!



Find Relief for Radiating Neck Pain and Headaches

Do you have neck pain that seems to trigger headaches? Have you noticed that the worse your headaches are, the stiffer your neck and upper back get? At SOS Physiotherapy, our therapists will help you figure out the connection between headaches and neck pain, and more importantly, how to find relief!

Neck pain has a way of interfering with the most basic activities. Getting out of bed and driving to work can become a challenge. Making it through a day sitting at a desk becomes a nightmare. Carrying groceries or attempting to pick up your child when they are upset becomes impossible to do without pain.

Some of these tasks are more difficult to get around than others, and, depending on how the pain is impacting your life, the stress of having to go through extra steps to make basic things happen can get out of hand.

The good news is that with guidance from our physiotherapists, you can find solutions to your pain and find out how to manage your headaches. Call SOS Physiotherapy today to learn how to help you live the life you want, with less pain!

WHAT CAUSES RADIATING NECK PAIN AND HEADACHES?

Neck pain is one of those types of pain that is difficult to work around. Neck pain will frequently radiate up into the base of your skull and into your head. Once neck pain begins to turn into headaches, attempting to concentrate becomes exceedingly difficult.

There are a large number of culprits that could be behind your experience of neck pain, including accidents, such as a car accident or a slip-and-fall accident. One of the most common ways to trigger pain in your neck that radiates to the head is through weightlifting or other sports-related injuries.

Sometimes what causes your neck pain is a bad habit that you don't think twice about, like watching TV at the end of a long day or keeping your neck at an odd angle as you enjoy your favorite show. Or maybe your headache/neck pain starts from your posture as you type at your desk every day hunched over.

We usually consider these poor habits to be harmless. But the reality is that they could be

putting undue stress on your neck, and if you aren't careful, this could translate to a pinched nerve.

When neck pain develops due to a pinched nerve, the radiating neck pain can result in severe headaches, and in some cases, even migraine-like headaches. The pinched nerve can radiate from the neck into the skull and can cause severe pain.

The cause of the issue isn't always as simple to identify. Working with a physiotherapist at SOS Physiotherapy can help to clarify the source of the pain and, more importantly, the solution.

HOW PHYSIOTHERAPY HELPS RADIATING NECK PAIN AND HEADACHES

The good news is that there is a lot you can do to support the healthy operation of your neck, thereby reducing the severity or frequency of your neck pain.

During physiotherapy, your neck pain will be addressed holistically, taking into consideration the initial injury that may have caused the pain to develop and any other habits, movements, or compensations that may contribute to the discomfort.

Physiotherapy uses strategies like manual therapy, targeted stretching, and strengthening exercises to reduce neck pain. Most of these strategies can be adopted as a home program to help you address your neck pain when it's bothering you the most.

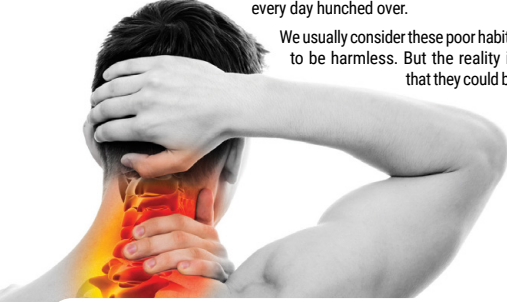
Adopting healthier habits can have a significant impact on your management of neck pain. These include:

- Practicing improved posture
- Exercising regularly
- Using lumbar support in your desk chair and car
- Engaging in yoga or Pilates

One of the primary goals of physiotherapy is to address whole-body well-being by encouraging improved overall health. In many situations, this includes improved flexibility and range-of-motion training, muscle building and strength training, and activities that reduce your stress, including walks or meditation.

The best way to be free of neck pain is to prevent it from developing. The longer you let neck pain linger and disrupt your life, the more difficult it becomes to treat. The intelligent thing to do is to consult a physiotherapist as soon as possible!

If you're struggling with recurring headaches and neck pain, call SOS Physiotherapy today for a comprehensive assessment. We're here to help you alleviate and prevent your pain once and for all!



www.sosphysiotherapy.ca

SOS PHYSIOTHERAPY IS OPEN FOR VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON TREATMENTS! CALL ANY ONE OF OUR 3 LOCATIONS

Belmont Clinic
Belmont Professional Centre
564 Belmont Avenue West, Suite 301
Kitchener, Ontario N2M 5N6
TEL: (519) 743-8787

Elmira Clinic
Behind Wellness Centre (Clock Tower)
3 Wyatt Street East, Suite 2
Elmira, Ontario N3B 2H4
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Northfield Clinic
Waterloo Corporate Campus (Sobeys Plaza)
595 Parkside Drive, Suite 5A
Waterloo, Ontario N2L 0C7
TEL: (519) 888-7070



On Your Way to 5K

New to running and wondering what's the best way to start?

Join us for our FREE

5K Running Group!

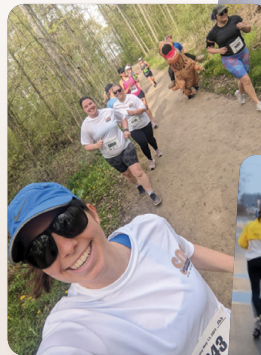
Registration is now open for our FREE Beginner Spring Running Program! Join our chiropractor and running enthusiast **Rachel Goldsworthy** and our physiotherapist and running athlete **Ali Dings** for our 10 week program starting from Wednesday March 27th to May 22nd. The group will meet at the SOS Northfield location at 7:15 pm - 8:15 pm each Wednesday where you will start a progressive running program and learn how to run safely, **no experience required!**

You will also receive:

- a FREE digital training plan
- complete 30-60 minute Run/Walk programs led by our experts
- and will finish off by completing the Neil Dunford Memorial 5K Run at the end of the 10 week program

Call or visit your local SOS Physiotherapy Clinic for more details on how to sign up now. We can't wait to see you there!

Or just scan the QR code to visit the Registration page.



CALL ANY ONE OF OUR 3 LOCATIONS TODAY!

MEET OUR NORTHFIELD CO-OPS!



HAILEY

Meet Hailey! She is a second year student at the University of Waterloo and is very excited to be joining the SOS Co-op team. Some fun facts about Hailey are that she was a competitive dancer for over 10 years and is fluent in French. Bienvenue Hailey!



JACOB

Meet Jacob! He is a fourth year Kinesiology student at the University of Waterloo. Jacob enjoys being active by playing varsity baseball and beach volleyball in the summer. A fun fact about Jacob is that he is a huge Star Wars fan! May the Force be with you, Jacob!



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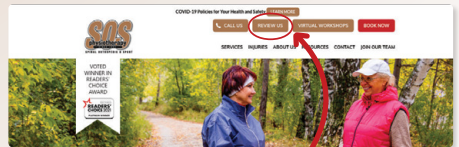
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Take a Deep Breath



Reading an educational piece about how to breathe properly might sound silly to some, but the vast majority of my patients have improper breathing patterns and tend to adopt poor strategies when experiencing physical and emotional discomfort. This is one of the most important things for us to focus on during rehab because we need oxygen to heal. If we know how to make sure we are not depriving our lungs and tissues or proper airflow we can help ourselves heal faster and improve our quality of life. Deep breathing has been associated with a multitude of health benefits including heart rate and blood pressure regulation, decreases in stress hormones, strengthening of the immune system and increases in energy. Our bodies do not work as well when we are stressed so here are some tips on how to use our breath to help us heal and thrive:



- 1. Use Your Diaphragm** – When practicing proper breathing, we have to make sure we are not creating undue pressure in our bodies by allowing the diaphragm to descend and keeping the chest relaxed. Sit tall on the floor or in a chair or even lie on your back with your knees bent and place one hand on your belly and one on your chest. Breathe in through your nose for 4 seconds, hold for up to 7 seconds and exhale through pursed lips for at least 8 seconds. During the inhale you should feel your belly rise and your chest and shoulders should stay completely relaxed. Do this 10 times in a row and practice this 6-7 times every day.
- 2. Do Not Hold Your Breath** – When feeling pain or doing any exercise, make sure you have a steady flow of oxygen the whole time. We tend to hold our breath and gasp when experiencing sudden or severe discomfort and in these moments we can help ourselves by calming down and practicing the above techniques. Further, during heavy resistance training we tend to use the “Valsalva maneuver” which involves us holding our breath and bracing. This can create unnecessary and harmful pressure in our abdomen which may lead to injury. Instead, breathe out during the contraction of an exercise and breathe in when returning to the starting position.
- 3. Practice Practice Practice!** – These patterns may not come easily to some but just like any other skill when we want to improve we have to keep practicing until it becomes second nature. Remind yourself to practice proper breathing when you are working at the computer, watching TV, driving in your car, walking the dog, etc. The more you do it, the easier it will become! Do not be afraid to ask your therapist or look up some videos on Youtube if you are not sure if you are doing it properly.



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Exercise Essentials

CHIN TUCK WITH SUBOCCIPITAL STRETCH

I have recently had a lot of patients come to me with neck pain for various reasons, most of which having to do with more time sitting and less movement during the winter months. When we sit slouched and with a forward head posture, the suboccipital muscles below our skull can get quite tight and lead to headaches, neck pain and upper back pain. Trying this Chin Tuck Stretch to give those tight neck muscles some relief. This exercise should be done gently and without pain or discomfort. If you feel your symptoms get worse or you start to feel a referral down one or both of your arms, stop immediately and let your physiotherapist know next time you see them. Here's how it done:

1. Sit tall and long with your feet flat on the ground, chin parallel to the floor and with your ribs down (low back should not be arched).
2. Interlock your fingers and place your hands behind your head with your index fingers just underneath the base of the skull.
3. Gently retract your neck backwards while nodding your head slightly like you are looking down your nose. Your neck should feel like it is lengthening but your head should not be dropped forward.
4. Aim to feel the stretch at the base of your skull, hold for 10 seconds and repeat 5-6 times, no more than 3-4 times per day.



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