Neck and back pain is a major problem in the U.S. It is the second most common reason for missing work, affecting four out of five people at some time in their life. The most common causes of neck and back pain include strains, sprains, arthritis, degenerative disc disease, herniated discs, scoliosis and osteoporosis. Neck and back pain is one of the most common conditions treated by orthopedic surgeons and the main condition treated by chiropractors. Many surgical treatments are ineffective, with patients reporting no improvement and increased pain after healing from the procedure.

Nutrition and whole food supplementation play a unique and profound role in neck and back pain, especially as it relates to the discs. Research has proven that malnutrition of the spinal discs can create mechanical stress which causes bulging and degeneration of the disc material, creating pain. Smoking has also been proven to cause nutritional deficiencies leading to neck and back pain. Deficiencies in omega 3 fatty acids promote tissue inflammation and can increase spinal pain. Also, increased body weight and poor nutritional habits contribute to spinal instability.

Many nutrients have been proven to help with neck and back pain. Methyl Sulfonyl Methane (MSM) has many therapeutic benefits in reducing pain from arthritis, muscle soreness and back pain. Glucosamine and Chondroitin sulfate help to reduce pain associated with osteoarthritis. Proteolytic enzymes reduce inflammation and increase healing of the tissues, unlike Tylenol, aspirin, and prescription anti-inflammatories. Manganese in special bound form was even found to help regenerate disc material in animals. Using proteolytic “PLANT” enzymes before treatment or surgery, increases the healing and reduction of pain and inflammation. Antioxidants are also very important to the body to ensure the damaged cells are repaired and are able to maintain their function in healing.

**Nutritional Support**

Eat more dark and colorful raw fruits and vegetables. Foods that contain fatty acids such as avocados, young coconuts and salmon are extremely good for the joints and disc spaces. Stay away from processed foods, fried foods and carbonation. Carbonation should be avoided because of its acidity. Stay away from smoking. It is associated with back pain because it causes malnutrition of the spinal discs, creating mechanical stress.

**Exercise**

Proper exercise programs have been proven to dramatically reduce neck and back pain and are necessary for complete recovery. A stretching program for the legs and especially the hamstrings with the low back is important. Strengthening exercises for the abdominals and other muscles help your core be stronger, which takes pressure off your spine and discs.

**Drugs**

NSAIDS (Non Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs) like Tylenol, aspirin, or prescription drugs like Naproxen, Cox-2 inhibitors and inflammatory pain relief type drugs actually cause cartilage damage instead of fixing it. Research done at the Indiana University School of Medicine proved this point. Manipulation of the spine to stimulate nerve and nutrient flow is highly recommended. It is a most effective form of treatment for cervical, thoracic or lumber dysfunction. Patient satisfaction with results is higher when chiropractic care and nutrition is used over medical care that doesn’t teach holistic principles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Protocol to nutritionally support the reduction of neck and back pain</th>
<th>Medication Interaction Guide - 2010 Optimal Health Systems, LLC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Severe back pain</td>
<td>Dehydrating pain to a point you cannot function normally:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Acute</td>
<td>3 times a day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Chronic</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>σ 1 Joint Pak</td>
<td>3 times a day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Muscle Rx</td>
<td>2 times a day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimal Fruit &amp; Veggie Complete</td>
<td>1 serving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Moderate back pain**

Joint Pak consisting of 2 Acute and 4 Chronic 2 times a day Chondroitin, Glucosamine, Proteolytic enzymes

3 Muscle Rx 2 times a day Glutamine, Creatine, Magnesium, BCAA’s

Optimal Fruit & Veggie Complete daily Antioxidants from raw fruits and veggies

Nutritional Support

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