



HAPPY  
*St Patrick's*  
DAY



## DOES STRESS CAUSE NECK PAIN?

Does stress cause neck pain? The short answer is no! At Anders and Associates, we like to say “contributes to” instead of “cause.” The casual way healthcare professionals throw around terms can lead to confusion and, worse still, ineffective treatment. Fortunately, our highly skilled therapists know how to dig deep and find the root cause of your neck pain, and this information helps you find relief!

Let's discuss Nicole, a 40-something-year-old working mother of three. Nicole was used to being very active, balancing her work schedule with getting her kids to all the various activities and school functions that come with being a mom nowadays.

Her neck pain first started as a crick in the neck when she woke up one morning. As the day progressed from driving her kids around to sitting at her desk, she noticed turning her head became more difficult and painful, making focusing on work nearly impossible.

Nicole struggled to figure out why her neck started hurting and came to the conclusion that stress “must be” the culprit. The more pain and difficulty moving she had, the more convinced she was that stress was to blame.

### UNDERSTANDING NICOLE'S NECK PAIN

One of the most common things we hear from our patients is that their pain started for “no apparent reason.” Like Nicole, people will wake up with a crick in their neck or notice a stiffness turning when driving in the car. It is also common for people to notice tightness in their upper back and neck after a long day.

So, what is actually the source of the pain? In most cases, there is an issue with the neck joints or the neck muscles due to prolonged positions. Our neck joints don't like remaining in any position for extended periods. In Nicole's case, she first noticed her pain in the morning, which may have been related to her neck position while sleeping. It is also important to note that in Nicole's case, the first sign of any issue was in the morning when she woke up, unrelated to stress.

As Nicole's day progressed, her pain got worse. But this also was more likely related to how she held her neck while driving or sitting at her computer. In both cases, her posture, specifically how she held her neck, seems to have contributed to her pain. Prolonged sitting can lead to a forward head position, resulting in tension to soft tissue (i.e., muscles, tendons, and ligaments) or negative changes to our blood flow.

The muscles of our neck function best when we move them. So, holding her head in one position likely led to irritation of the muscles and affected her ability to move her neck, which in turn caused stress.

Stress “contributes” to neck pain because, when we experience stress, our bodies naturally respond by tensing up as a protective measure. This tension can lead to discomfort, particularly in the neck and upper back region. Research studies have found that individuals with higher stress levels reported increased neck pain as compared to those with lower stress levels. This is why we say “contributes” to, but not the cause of, neck pain.



## HOW PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN HELP ALLEVIATE NECK PAIN

We will target the source of your pain by performing a thorough examination, starting with your medical history and details about how, when, and where your symptoms began. As we saw with Nicole, determining how, when, and why the pain started helps us eliminate possibilities and get to the actual root cause(s).

Our therapists will also analyze your posture and movement to identify any limitations or restrictions contributing to your condition. We'll use this information to design a program that addresses your specific needs.

Our treatment plans focus on relieving your pain and improving your posture, mobility, strength, etc., and educating you about managing your symptoms. Your program will likely include manual therapy (i.e., soft tissue work and/or joint mobilizations), targeted stretches, exercises, activity modification, or posture recommendations.

We'll listen to your unique situation and specific issues and then work to help you find relief and get back to your normal routine.

## BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY!

If you're dealing with neck pain or looking for someone to help you figure out what is causing your issues, call us today and set up a consultation!

Sources:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1836955320301417?via%3Dihub>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36180150/>

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<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28972599/>

# SEPARATING MUSCLE AND JOINT PAIN: THE KEY TO LASTING RESULTS

Do you notice tightness in your upper back and neck? Is it more tight on one side than that on the other? The location and characteristics of your neck pain are valuable clues for our skilled therapists at Anders and Associates to identify the likely culprit for your pain, which helps us guide you to lasting relief.

Ready to unlock the secret to lasting relief from neck and upper back pain? Don't ignore those subtle signs — reach out to our skilled therapists today, and let us help you resolve your pain once and for all!

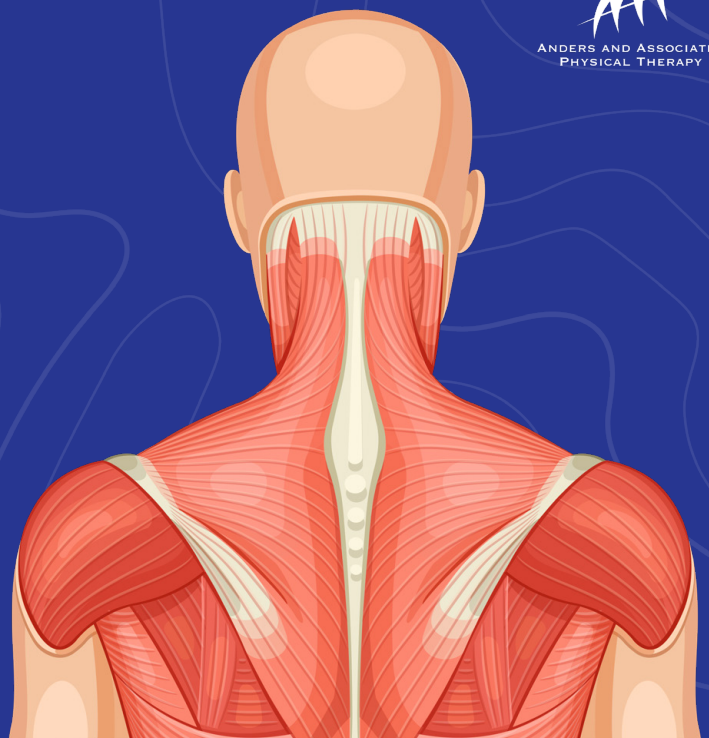
## Neck Pain — Muscle vs. Joint

It can be difficult for people to determine where their pain originates. One of the most common reasons people describe their pain is “no apparent reason.” It often seems to come out of the blue or while doing the same everyday things you usually do.

You can use these clues to point you in the right direction:

- **Pain on one side = joint pain.** Although this, and all other clues, is not 100% true, it is a good starting point. Muscle tension tends to be equally distributed, whereas joint pain is typically one-sided.
- **Difficulty or inability to turn = joint dysfunction.** Muscle tension tends to make movement uncomfortable or to feel tight on the opposite side of where you're turning towards (pain on the left when turning right). Joint dysfunction usually causes the inability to turn or the sensation of a blockage when turning to the same side as the pain (pain on the right when turning right).
- **Pain that travels = joint.** Muscles tend to feel tight and sore in the muscles themselves, compared to joint pain, which travels from the source of pain up into the head or down into the shoulder and arm.

These clues can help us determine what is causing your pain, but the best way to get lasting relief is to schedule an appointment with one of our therapists!



**BOOK YOUR  
APPOINTMENT  
TODAY!**



**(702) 751-0798**

# SEASONAL RECIPE

## SHAMROCK GREEN SMOOTHIE



### Ingredients

- 2 bananas, frozen
- 1 green apple, core removed
- 2 cups water or milk (non-dairy if necessary)
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 handfuls spinach (about 1–2 cups)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Honey to taste (optional)

### Directions

In a blender, add all ingredients. Blend until smooth, adding more water if you want a thinner smoothie.

Adjust sweetness with additional honey, if desired.

## OUR SERVICES

- Physical therapy
- Orthopedic rehabilitation
- Sports injuries
- Joint rehabilitation
- Arthritis
- Tendonitis
- Cold Laser Therapy
- AND MORE!



**CALL US TODAY!**  
**(702) 751-0798**

## EXERCISE ESSENTIALS

### SITTING CERVICAL SIDEBENDING RIGHT WITH OVERPRESSURE

*This exercise helps relieve neck stress.*

Start by sitting upright in a chair with your low back supported. Tuck in the chin to straighten the neck. Place your right hand over the top of your head, with fingers pointed towards the ear. Keep your left hand on the back of the neck as support. Bend your neck to the right, allowing your right hand to assist you going deeper into the motion. Hold for 3 seconds.



## WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR SUCCESS STORY!

Click below to tell your PT story  
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forward to hearing from you!

 **REVIEWS**



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