

# Health & Wellness

by OHG

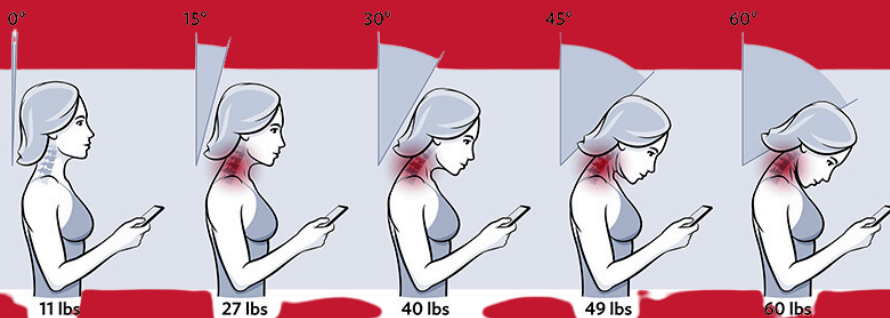
## Happy ValenSpine's Day! Celebrate with Better Spine Health

The health of your spine is vital to the health of your whole body. A strong spine allows us to move and exercise which helps keep us in healthy physical shape. A straight spine also allows your brain to receive signals from the rest of the body. The spinal cord goes from the base of the brain down to the waist area and is protected by the spinal column. Peripheral nerves running throughout the rest of the body send messages to the spinal cord which then relays them to the brain for interpretation. If these nerves become damaged or "pinched", these messages will struggle to get through, if at all.

### How to Show Your Spine Some Love

#### 1 Prevent Text Neck

Look up from your phone! Staring down at your cell phone places additional stress on your neck, shoulders, and upper back - causing pain with repetitive use. In fact, for every inch that your head tilts forward, your spine undergoes an additional 10lbs of strain.



Be mindful of your posture while using your tech devices. Position your computer, tablet, or smartphone so that you're not tilting your head downward. Ideally, when holding your head upright, the center of your screen should be at eye level.



Avoid cradling your phone between your ear and neck - holding this unnatural posture for a long time can cause pain.



Don't forget to take breaks every 20 min or so!

## 2 Wear Supportive Shoes

Good shoes with arch support improve overall posture and alignment when standing. Corrective custom orthotics are a great resource for arch support and preventing flat feet.

## 3 Practice Good Sleep Habits

Get a comfortable and supportive mattress and supportive pillow for good spinal alignment. Sleep on your back with a pillow under your knees or on your side with a pillow between your knees, keeping your neck neutral.

Avoid excessively thick or multiple pillows. Choose a fiberfill or feather/down pillow as these are usually better than foam.

## 4 Seek Professional Help

Your chiropractor can make sure your spine is in alignment by fixing any restrictions that can be caused by things such as poor posture, age, and other disorders. Through gentle spinal manipulations, a chiropractor can get your spine back in proper working order. You will increase your range of motion, improve your mobility, be more relaxed, and reduce your pain.



# Home Exercises

## Stretching

### 1 Upper Trap Stretch

While sitting, grasp the bottom of a chair for stability with your right arm. While looking straight ahead, place your left hand on top of your head, and gently pull your head sideways toward the left. Against the resistance of your arms, attempt to bring your right ear and right shoulder together for seven seconds. Relax and stretch further toward the left. "Lock-in" to each new position, and do not allow any slack. Repeat three contract/relax cycles on each side twice per day.



### 2 Corner Pectoral Stretch

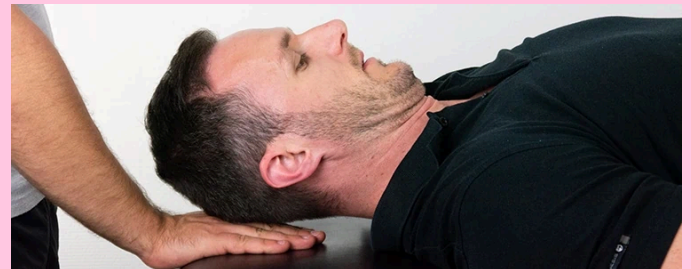
Begin standing, facing a corner with your palms on the walls above head level. Step toward the corner and "lean in" to stretch your chest muscles. Against the resistance of the wall, attempt to push your hands into the wall and toward each other for 7 seconds. Relax and "lean in" to increase the stretch. Lock into this new position and repeat 3 contract/relax cycles, twice per day or as directed.



## Strengthening

### 3 Deep Neck Flexion

Lie on your back, with your head supported. Perform a "chin tuck" by retracting your head to create a double chin. Lift your head, bringing chin toward your chest without lifting shoulders- as though you are looking at your toes. Hold this position for 3-4 seconds. Lower your head and relax. Keep your teeth apart during exercise to decrease straining at the jaw.



### 4 Bird Dog

Begin on your hands and knees in a quadruped position. Extend your left leg and right arm into a fully straightened position. Hold this contraction for two seconds and return to the quadruped position. Do not arch your back or twist your hips at any point. Repeat with your opposite limbs, slowly alternating for three complete sets of 10 reps twice per day.





# Dark Choco Raspberry Cupcakes

## Ingredients

- 1/2 c unsalted butter, 4 pieces
  - 2 oz bittersweet chocolate
  - 1/2 c Dutch-processed cocoa
  - 3/4 c all-purpose flour
  - 1/2 tsp baking soda
  - 3/4 tsp baking powder
  - 2 large eggs, room temp
  - 1/2 tsp salt
  - 1/2 c plain Greek yogurt
- ### Raspberry Frosting
- 3/4 c unsalted butter, room temp
  - 2 c powdered sugar
  - 1 c fresh raspberries
  - 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
  - additional fresh raspberries, for garnish if desired

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350F. Line muffin tin with paper liners.
2. Place butter, chocolate and cocoa powder in a medium bowl. Microwave for 30 sec intervals until mixture is smooth and melted. Alternative: double-boiler method.
3. Whisk together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Whisk the eggs in a medium bowl, then add sugar, vanilla, and salt. Once smooth, whisk in the cooled chocolate mixture. Sift 1/3 of the flour mixture into the bowl and gently combine. Add the Greek yogurt and whisk to combine. Finally, sift the rest of the flour into the bowl and whisk until fully combined. The cupcake batter will be thick.
4. Divide the batter evenly among the muffin tins, filling each about 2/3 full. Bake for 18-20 min, or until a toothpick test is clean.
5. While cupcakes are cooling, prepare frosting. Puree raspberries in blender or food processor. Pour the puree through a fine sieve to eliminate seeds. Place butter, half the powdered sugar, vanilla, and puree into a mixing bowl. Beat over low speed until well-blended. Add rest of sugar and increase speed to medium. Mix until light and fluffy.
6. Frost cooled cupcakes with the raspberry buttercream and garnish each cupcake with a raspberry.

# Health Benefits of Massage Therapy

## 1. Lower stress

- The long-term effects of stress can take emotional and physical tolls. Massage therapy may relieve stress and conditions associated with it, such as tension headaches.

## 2. Increase immune function

- Medical research indicates that massage therapy can help boost immune system strength by increasing the activity level of the body's natural "killer T cells," which fight off viruses.

## 3. Boost mental health and wellness

- Research suggests that symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression (all associated with mental health) may be directly affected with massage therapy.

## 4. Manage pain

- Pain can negatively affect a person's quality of life and impede recovery from illness or injury.

## 5. Improve physical fitness

- Elite and recreational athletes alike can benefit from massage therapy. Massage can reduce muscle tension, improve exercise performance and prevent injuries.



Gift your  
**sweetheart** a  
Valentine's Day  
massage!

\*Ask the front desk about gift certificates.