**Late Winter Update**

Hello all,
    I’ve been concerned that so many, especially of the Long Distance clients, are not making faster progress in recovery, so I’m enclosing here a questionnaire for your own consideration; you don’t need to return it to me. Just answer the questions and then take it again in a few months. For those of you who are only in the first few months of your program, you are probably not doing all the exercises, and that’s fine. For example, you should not be doing the Leg-Overs until you are in recovery or close to it. There are several of the stretches I never did while recovering, so do the  ones you can do with relative ease and don’t do ones that cause your head to turn while you are doing the stretch. Remember to work slowly (much slower than in the video), holding the extensions and breathing; it’s the slow held stretch that reprograms the muscles and results in the elongation that will bring you into recovery. Most important, it’s the back of the head and the EOP area that are ground zero with ST. You must be in a severe military when doing exercises that call for that, if this program is to work for you.
    To review the correct position, do a military on the floor on your back (no pillow), pressing the back of the neck hard into the floor, chin way down. Feel this in the back of the head and neck. Hold several seconds, release and repeat. Then duplicate that same feeling when you are doing the stretches that call for a military. Practice the military into the mattress in bed, then a few Head Raises, then a few Head Smiles in bed (no pillow) both morning and night. I still do this. The severe military is the key that makes these exercises effective for recovery. We must reorder our body so that the head and neck are aligned on top of the spine, standing very erect, chin tucked a bit.
    The more you practice the military, elongating these muscles in the back of the head itself, the faster you will progress. If you  are fairly new to the program don’t do all the reps. Begin with about 2 or 3 and gradually work up to the suggested amount. Then I can’t emphasize this enough, that  daily massage is essential if you want to recover from the symptoms. If you don’t have someone who is doing it daily for you along with the trigger point work, then use the Kneading Fingers together with the bodo on your neck and under the ridge of the EOP and the Shepherd’s Crook on your back and shoulders.
 **Here are the questions:**1. Are you sleeping on your back and never on your short side?
2. Are you doing your stretching daily (the ones you can comfortably do)?
3. Are you doing a few select stretches throughout the day, every day, like the Bend-Hang, Shrugs, Straight-Chair Stretch, and Body Curl (you can do this one just sitting in a chair, but when you are cross-legged, you are also getting a good stretch  in the hips and lower back)? These are 4 of the most important ones.
4. Are you getting daily massage and trigger point work and bodoing your neck and EOP ridge, skipping the center spot where the brain stem is?
5. If working, are you doing a few stretches every hour or so and sitting in a gentle military, hopefully using your Obusforme?
6. Do you watch T.V. lying on the floor on your back, head propped up, chin way down?
7. In bed, are you using a heated blanket or mattress pad so that you don’t get chilly at night and thus curl up on your side?
8. Are you doing a severe military where called for in your exercises?
9. Are you taking frequent rest breaks (a minute or two or more if you can) on your back on the floor, chin down, breathing deeply. This isn’t time off; our bodies have forgotten how to relax and we must teach our body to do that again.
10. Are you using your Obusforme most of the time - in the car, at the office, at the dinner table, in restaurants, etc.?
11. Are you using ice packs frequently to minimize both spasms and pain?
12. Are you completely avoiding cigarettes and smoke?
13. If you garden, or when doing chores, are you mindful to keep your chin tucked? Remember that when we either jut our head forward and/or have the head back and chin up, we are allowing the S.T. to dominate and undoing some of the progress we’ve made.
14. Are you avoiding as much stress as possible?
15. Are you taking your Shaklee vitamins or an equivalent in a high quality natural, food-based product?
16. Are you completely off sugar and all aspartame sugar imitations, like NutraSweet, using instead either fructose or xylitol?
17. Are you completely avoiding any of the drugs on the list of meds that can cause Dystonic reactions? That includes many of the anti-depressants like Haldol, Prozac, Zoloft and Paxil.
18. Are you working to keep you attitude positive? I know how hard this is when you are in pain and fighting the spasms all the time, but God finally got through to me that saying things like “I’ll never get well” or “This isn’t going to work” is very defeating. Your body will respond to what you say, so practice saying “I’m getting better”, “I can do this”, etc.
    The answers to all these questions should be Yes. None of us is perfect - I sure wasn’t but if we make these things our goal, and work everyday toward that goal, our bodies will change. Your will and attitude and faith will eventually overwhelm what the S.T. has done to your body. If at all possible, I strongly encourage all of you to use a warm (85 to 99 degrees) pool a few times a week, paddling around on your back (with a foam noodle under your waist), head elevated just a bit and chin way down. Your body will reward you for this. I did this 3 times a week while recovering.
A couple more items:
   Those of you who have been here know that I have two ottomans in the clinic, very light weight and soft, vinyl and filled with little beads. That’s what I use to prop my head on when watching T.V. My clients who have tried it love it and have ordered one. When it arrives it’s very full and hard. You can unzip it and empty out several cups of the beads, but keep them in case you want to add some back in. It should be soft enough to push down a place for your head. It’s sold by Carol Wright Gifts   [http://www.carolwrightgifts.com](http://www.carolwrightgifts.com/)
Phone 1-402-464-6116 Weekdays 8a-10p, Saturday 9a-5p EST. It’s called a Foot Prop Hassock
Ivory #81406, Blue #81414, Black #84038, Brown #86975  $16.99 Additionals $14.99.

    A long distant client, Berta at  BKeeMedResearch@aol.com  had a physician prescribe the following device (insurance paid for it):
**Intelect HVP - portable pulse high-volt stimulator.**  It provides deep muscle stimulation. She said “During the past two sessions, using it twice daily, morning and right before bed and using it when practicing the military, I have noticed a substantial difference and feel that my neck is more mobile than  before.” You can see it at [http://www.hpms.com](http://www.hpms.com/)   Scroll down to
Chattanooga Group Intelect HVP High Volt Portable Simulator #INT005
The website price is $450 and retail is $595. Their phone is (603) 898-3909. I have not used this but am just passing along the info Berta sent.
That's it for this update. Please don’t be discouraged if you can’t do it all right now; remember I began with only one stretch, the Bend-Hang and a 10 minute or so neck and shoulder rub each night, and I recovered, so build up to the ideal as you are able. My soft shoulder is available, rent-free, so please call me or email if you have questions or just need to vent. I’m praying for you. Also remember that you can now access past updates at <http://www.stclinic.com/updates.html>
My best as always, Abbie
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Spasmodic Torticollis Recovery Clinic, Inc.
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