**Summer 2008 Update**  
    Hello all, I meant to get this out a couple of months ago, but was down with flu for almost 2 months - the first time I’ve been really sick in years, so please forgive my tardiness! My standard natural remedies which usually work, didn’t and I had to bite the bullet and get antibiotics. Humbling. Spring and summer have been busy so far with many clients. After 10 years with no price increase, I’ve been forced to increase the fees to cover the rise in costs here. I take so little in income that my tax preparer told me I don’t need to file next year, and I’ve always tried to keep my fees very low but everything is going up - printing, payment to nutritionists, vitamins, other materials, utilities and of course gas.   
    A suggestion on the military which is the key to recovery: if you are having trouble doing some of the standing stretches in a military, try doing them standing against a wall, heels and back of head touching the wall, chin way down (don‘t forget to breathe - never hold your breath). Try this with the Dumb-Bell-Raise and the Flys. Also try this: get into a military against a wall (and use the Eeeee in order to bring the stretch also into the SCM’s and jaw muscles) - and now in that position walk slowly a few steps away from the wall to practice walking in that severe military. Obviously you’re not going to always walk in a severe military but practicing that prepares your body for an erect gentle military posture. Any stretch that you really feel up in the back of the skull is especially helpful as the elongation of those skull muscles MUST occur if you want to move into recovery. You should feel this with any exercise involving the military and also with the Flex, one of my favorites.  Do the Chest Flexor on the floor on your back in a military!  
    Remember to take frequent rest breaks on your back on the floor deep breathing - for a couple of minutes or longer. You can’t just push push a body that is already in trauma; your body needs that rhythm of push and rest. Also remember it’s the long slow held stretch that reprograms the body. I’ve discovered a new sweetener that I love. It’s Agave Nectar, a syrup similar to honey but very low on the Glycemic index so even most diabetics can use it. It’s nice in tea or on pancakes or to use in some recipes that call for honey. Health food stores carry it. I hope most of you are using the horseshoe or crescent pillow. The one I use now is the Homedics Memory Foam horseshoe that I got at Walgreen’s for $20.00. It’s quite firm. The MOST important thing is to be sure to pull it up away from your head so that it tucks your chin and it is not under your neck! This will give you a nice elongation at the back of the head and neck thru the night and help you to stay on your back.   
    If any of you are using L-Tryptophan, there is a caution against using it if you are on an SSRI antidepressant, but I HOPE none of you are on any SSRI as they are known to cause onset of Dystonia and/or to make it worse!! I’m getting my L-Tryptophan now from [organicpharmacy.org](http://organicpharmacy.org/) and I use the NOW brand. It’s made and encapsulated in the U.S. and is inexpensive.   
    There has been some recent research released indicating that cosmetic Botox in the face has a tendency to migrate to the brain. Who knows if that is true, and is that also true of Botox injected into the neck and shoulders? As you know I’m not anti-med as a body in trauma needs all the help it can get to calm the spasms and pain, and that can actually enhance your recovery and enable you to do the exercises with more comfort, but just be careful that the meds you are using are safe for S.T. Clearly the goal is to move into ongoing recovery and be med-free, but the drugs can help bridge you through the process. Some reminders - that ice packs are more effective than heat, however long hot baths and Jacuzzis are highly recommended! A heat source in your bed (heated mattress pad or electric blanket) will help you  to stay  on your back. Avoid rolling the head back, chin up as this shortens the muscles in the back of the neck and head, making the ST worse. Be careful while gardening this summer not to jut the head forward while squatting to plant or weed. The Foot Strap is a wonderful tool. I’ve sent you a photo of how to use this before. If you need a reminder, email me and I’ll send it to you. It’s not as good as the Head Harness which in my opinion is a **must**, but it’s close and so portable. Get it from  [huggermugger.com](http://huggermugger.com/)   I recommend the 10 foot with D ring closure.   
    If you are using a Massage Therapist, please make a copy of Myra’s massage letter for your MT. I’m excited to report that Myra in coordination with another MT here in Santa Fe, is working on a book on Massage for ST with photos. It will be one of a kind in the world as far as I know and I hope will be a standard in every massage school in the country. I’ll let you know as soon as it’s available and will have a link on our site. If you haven’t seen it, we now have a 12 minute Intro video on our site. Go to our home page [STclinic.com](http://stclinic.com/) and click on the Links link at the very top. On that page you’ll see directions for opening the video. The first part is me, then Cindy and the last part is Myra doing a massage demo. The massage must be done daily, even if only with the Kneading Fingers machine.   
    Please remember that the norm in recovery is to roller-coaster up and down with good times and bad times; that’s how the body gets well, so don’t get discouraged. IF you are doing all the elements - daily stretching with some weight work, daily massage, practicing the military, sleeping on your back, taking high quality vitamins and avoiding the bad foods, being careful with habit patterning (not slouching, not jutting the head forward, etc.), and not letting yourself say negative things like “I’ll never get well”, etc. then you should be seeing progress. Faith is important. We’re not alone here and need to reach out to God for help. Just as there is a natural flow in nature, water falling to nourish the ground, evaporating, rising to forms clouds with rain again nourishing the earth, it’s my belief that there is a similar flow between God’s love for us and our willingness to love Him back, that puts us in harmony and helps us to get well. Blessings to all of you, Abbie  
      
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**Spasmodic Torticollis Recovery Clinic, Inc.   
Be encouraged - there's hope!!!!**[**http://www.STclinic.com**](http://www.stclinic.com/) **...............**