

March 2023 Pain-Free Living Newsletter

March is said to “come in like a lion and go out like a lamb,” but I’m not sure of that idea if you live in the north. It seems like it would be more appropriate to think that of April. As for Florida, March is a great month, cool at night and warm during the day. So, here’s to celebrating the month I always equate with St. Patrick’s Day and the color kelly green!

This month I will be talking about a problem that isn’t the most common injury, but one that I had several years ago. My heel hurt after I slammed it hard into the street when I was coming off a curb. It was a year of excruciating pain that NOTHING would help! I tried ice, heat, all kinds of creams, and of course, massage. I saw an orthopedic doctor, had x-rays done twice, both times showed that the bone was not cracked. and it didn’t change if I propped it up or stood on it.

Absolutely nothing gave relief! And none of the professionals I went to ever mentioned the topic of this month’s newsletter.

This month’s topic is **Bone Bruise**.

There are many reasons for heel pain, such as:

- Achilles tendonitis
- Bursitis
- Heel spur
- Plantar fasciitis
- And lots more!

Each of these can be caused by tight muscles of the lower leg, and if you have any of them you would be well to look into muscles to eliminate the pain. But the heel pain that plagued me for a year was literally a bruise to my heel bone. All the muscles were just fine, and nothing showed up on either of the x-rays my doctor performed.

This month’s newsletter is meant to give you a heads-up on something I hope you’ll never experience. I want to talk about bone bruises because it could happen to any bone in your body, and the odds are slim that anyone will ever consider it when you are searching for a solution to pain.

The bones most vulnerable to bruising are ones that are not protected by muscles. This can include your shoulder, elbow, sacrum, knee, and of course, your foot. It’s normally caused by a blunt force injury, such as falling on a hard surface, but with a strong enough impact, other bones can also become bruised.

If you’ve been to my office, and I’ve taught you self-treatments to continue your therapy at home, you’ve received the Perfect Ball that I use for therapy. I frequently hear people say they have been treating their arch, or other joints, with a lacrosse ball. That’s a terrible ball because it’s so hard it could easily bruise the bone. A baseball is another terrible treatment ball, for the same reason. If you don’t have a Perfect Ball, I suggest you use a tennis ball. A tennis ball won’t bruise your bone, and while the Perfect Ball is much better, the tennis ball is at least an acceptable alternative if necessary.

What NOT to do.....

Two years ago, I was having a tug-of-war with a big vine that was growing up the tree in my yard. It was a really stubborn vine and was very strong. But I was determined! I finally won – but at the cost of going flying down onto the cement driveway, landing squarely on my shoulder. Bad move!

The pain was terrible, and I had a problem moving my arm normally. It wasn't my smartest move, and since I could move my arm (painfully), I decided the bone wasn't broken. As a result, I compounded it by not going straight to a doctor. Another "not smart" move.

I used ice, massaged the muscles, and strapped my arm to my body so I wouldn't use my shoulder. When it still hurt two weeks later, I finally decided I should have it looked at by a physician. Fortunately, the bone wasn't broken. However, it was severely bruised. Ice helped to block the pain messages to my brain, but the bruise needed to heal on its own. It took almost six months before it was completely gone.

Having lived through it, I strongly suggest you go to your physician ASAP and get an x-ray to make sure nothing is broken. Your doctor may also order an MRI which can show the bone is bruised. I've since learned that the biggest problem a bone bruise causes is preventing blood flow to the area. This is more serious than it sounds.

What MAY help the healing.....

In both cases, my heel and my shoulder, I was massaging the entire area, and I believe keeping the blood flowing helped the bone heal without the danger of bone tissue dying from lack of blood.

Some websites say to elevate the injured area (tough to do if it's your sacrum), but I found that they don't give any other valuable advice. I did find that it helped to take a hot Epsom Salts bath. I don't know whether it was really helping the bone, or just calming down the rest of my body, but when we hurt, we'll do anything for some relief, even if it's a placebo.

I hope you never experience a bone bruise, but at least once you have had the x-ray to know nothing is broken, at least you'll be aware of why you are in pain, and you'll know that it really will eventually heal. Small comfort, but not knowing is even worse because we keep searching for a solution.

You Don't Need to Suffer!

I've written several books that show you how to self-treat aches and pains from your head to your feet – safely without bruising your bones or overstretching your muscles.

Check out www.FlexibleAthlete.com/shop to check out ways you can Stop Pain FAST!

Next Month's Topic.....

In April I'll be sharing about the muscles that cause the #1 repetitive strain injury in the entire world!

If you have, or know someone who has, low back pain, you won't want to miss the April *Pain-Free Living* newsletter.

My Interview with Trish Jenkins....

I had the good fortune to be interviewed by Trish Jenkins, an amazing woman who lives in Australia and interviews people from around the world. Here's the link in case you would like to check it out. I think it turned out pretty good 😊

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FpVEEegcTs>

Wishing you well,

Julie