A Wedding and an Adventure

By Maranda Eichenberger ATC, PTA

In July of 2018, I traveled to Valier, Montana for a college friend’s wedding. My fiancé and a couple of our close friends decided to make a trip out of it and go to Glacier National Park while we were out there. None of us had ever been to Glacier National Park, but now all of us would be willing to go back. It was a great trip with so much beautiful scenery. It was also nice to catch up with friends and get away for a little while.

Within the first 10 minutes we were able to spot a cow moose and her two little calves walking upstream. We were even able to snap a few pictures before she decided to walk off into the thick brush.

One of my favorite spots is the one pictured here with myself and my fiancé, Landon. This was a waterfall with the clearest and most beautiful blue water. We hopped from rock to rock and walked across a downed tree trunk to get closer to the water. Nothing like the sound of rushing water and a great mountain view.

While touring the park we were able to hike multiple different trails, one being the trail to the “Hidden Lake.” This was a 3 mile hike straight uphill, but the view from the top was well worth it. While on the trail we were able to stand just feet away from mountain goats, snapping some very nice pictures (shown below). Once we reached the top, the view over the lake was breathtaking. The water was crystal clear, we could see down to the very bottom from over a mile away. Normally you could hike down to the lake, but it was roped off due to recent grizzly bear activity. Every way you looked the views were gorgeous and we just sat at the top for a while taking in the scenery.

After adventuring through Glacier National Park for two days, it was finally wedding day. The wedding was at their family ranch, Holden Herefords. Miles and miles of open pasture and, on that day, one big white tent. The decorations were so thought out and country, with cow hides and fresh flowers and greenery and cow tanks filled with drinks. There was an alter set up overlooking the pasture with Hereford cattle roaming behind. Like most of the other places we had been that week, it made for perfect pictures. It was so much fun to be able to catch up with old friends and celebrate their new life together.

continued on page 2
Overall, the trip was amazing. We enjoyed exploring and hiking Glacier and seeing the ranch, as well as watching one of our close friends marry his best friend. I would highly recommend Glacier National Park to everyone, the sights were breathtaking.

Maranda Eichenberger joined New Life Physical Therapy in 2018 and is an athletic trainer as well as a physical therapist assistant. She currently works as part of our industrial work team.

Achilles Tendinopathy May Be Your “Achilles Heel”

By Bryan Cummings PT, OPT, OCS, ATC

Do you have tenderness in the heel or higher up the Achilles tendon?

Does walking cause pain and stiffness, especially with initial steps in the morning or after periods of sitting or resting?

Do you feel tightness in the calf?

Is there mild swelling over the Achilles tendon?

If you can answer yes to any of these questions you may have Achilles tendonopathy.

Achilles tendinopathy is irritation of the Achilles (calcaneal) tendon. The Achilles tendon attaches the muscles of the calf (gastrocnemius and soleus) to the heel (calcaneus). Pain can be present anywhere along the tendon, such as its heel attachment, but is most common just above the heel.

Approximately 24% of all athletes and 50% of runners will develop the condition, often in the form of an acute (sudden) injury. Non-athletes can also develop Achilles tendonopathy, but is more than likely the result of repetitive microtrauma over time.

Different factors have been commonly linked to Achilles tendonopathy such as calf muscle tightness, calf muscle weakness, abnormal foot structure, abnormal foot movement, improper footwear, a change in exercise routine or sport activity, and obesity.

When weakness and tightness of the calf muscles are involved, an eccentric loading program using exercises such as the ones below may be prescribed.

Begin standing on a small step or platform with your heels off the edge, holding onto a stable object for balance.

Raise both heels up, then lift one foot off the platform and slowly lower your other heel. Repeat this movement.

Make sure to maintain your balance and keep your back straight throughout the exercise.

2 times daily, 15 repetitions x 3 sets

Begin standing on a small step or platform with your heels off the edge, holding onto a stable object for balance.

Bend your knees, then raise both heels up, lift one leg off the step, and lower down slowly on your other foot. Repeat these movements.

Make sure to maintain your balance and keep your back straight throughout the exercise.

2 times daily, 15 repetitions x 3 sets

Begin in a standing position with one leg resting on a table or chair and the leg to be stretched resting on the ground.

Keeping your back straight and upright, squeeze your bottom, and slowly shift your weight forward until you feel a stretch in the front of your hip.

Make sure to keep your hips and shoulders facing forward, and do not arch your low back.

2 times daily, 30 second hold and repeat 3 times per side.

Although important, the exercises above will not address other contributors to the development of your heel pain when present. For example, a tight hip is commonly overlooked as a factor contributing to your abnormal Achilles stress. When your hip is tight, your gait is thrown off, which can over stress various parts of the body (including the Achilles). If you are not having success with your current management, you may need to have a thorough gait analysis and functional examination (including your hips). The standing hip flexor stretch is a common exercise we use to address hip stiffness.

There are a number of other treatments and exercises that may be of benefit to you. At New Life Physical Therapy, our PT’s are proficient in dry needling and a number of manual therapy techniques as well to address your heel pain and stiffness. Each person is unique as are their goals, therefore a few simple exercises (as listed above) may not be enough to achieve an optimal outcome. A physical therapy plan of care that encompasses a multi-modal approach of exercise instruction, hands-on treatment, and education may be your best option, especially if self-management (including pharmacy) is not working.

continued on page 3
Below are some recommendations we often make for management of symptoms as you progress through your program’s treatment and activity progressions.

**Ice-Massage:**
Fill a paper cup ¾ full with water and freeze. Remove enough paper to expose the ice. Rub the ice over the sore area for 3-5 minutes. Repeat 2-3 times a day.

**Supportive Shoes:**
Shop for shoes with a “positive” heel. Positive heel means the heel is higher than the front of the shoe. Running and walking shoes will typically have a positive heel, unless otherwise specified. Pictured is the New Balance 928 walking shoe, which provides excellent support to the foot and is helpful for a variety of foot/ankle conditions.

**Heel Lifts:**
Heel lifts can help relieve stress on a sore Achilles, but should not be a long-term solution. A variety of heel lift types are available at your local drug- or sporting-goods store. Amazon.com has an adjustable lift called Adjust-A-Lift Heel Lift 575 Single Insert Medium 3/8” to ¼” lift should suffice. Note: place a lift in each shoe to avoid creating an unbalanced pelvis.

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**Clinic Happenings:**

**Drawing Winner:**
Shirley won our drawing last month for an exercise Theraband. Congratulations to Shirley!

**Pictured here: Greg Strickland and Luca**

**Drawn Rose Strickland, New Life PT partner and physical therapist, gave birth to a healthy baby boy! Luca Strickland was welcomed into the Strickland family and into the world in January of 2019. We are thankful for Luca and wish God’s blessings and grace for their family.**

**We are happy to welcome Nancy Moyer to our New Life Team! Nancy is a patient services specialist working in our Portage location. Her area of focus is scheduling appointments, front desk reception, and customer service. Nancy moved to Portage from Iowa 20 years ago. She and her husband have 4 children, 2 grandsons, and 2 granddaughters. In her leisure time she loves to go camping with the families and enjoy weekend BBQ’s in their back yard. She and her husband also like to adventure through the countryside on their Harley.**

**Matt VanderKool, New Life Physical Therapy PT and Founder, has enjoyed coaching his son’s downhill ski race team for a while now. You may remember them winning their conference championship in the past. Well, they did it again for the 3rd time in a row at Tyrol Basin! Matt is very proud of the Madison Area Co-op team. Congratulations boys!**

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**Success Helping People Get Their “ING” On**

Lisa came to New Life Physical Therapy after injuring her left shoulder a little over a year ago and tells us her story. “The pain was so bad that I basically stopped moving my arm. I ended up having surgery and was referred to physical therapy. I had doubts that PT would help, but after just a few appointments, I realized how wrong I was. I worked with Nash for the most part, but also worked with Jordan. I would recommend either of them. They were respectful and attentive and motivated me to get my life back. I am back to doing just about everything I could do before I hurt my shoulder with little or no pain. I can lift and hold my grandbabies and that was really my most important goal. I am looking forward to camping and kayaking this summer. I highly recommend New Life physical Therapy.” Great job Lisa!
Did You Know?

You do not have to waste time and money on unnecessary doctor visits and tests. You are able to see our physical therapist directly with no referral required!

You do not have to miss out on doing the things you want, need or love to do because of pain or limitations in physical performance. New Life Physical Therapy can help you reclaim your active life with our experienced and caring specialists.

Try Physical Therapy First.

Chicken and Sausage with Barley in a Pot

This is a healthy and filling dish I have adjusted to our family’s tastes for those occasional cold days we may have yet, before spring comes to stay. The flavors are delicious.

- Uncooked medium barley, 3 servings
- 6 oz. Bacon chopped
- 9-12 oz. Andouille Sausage sliced
- 2 lb. (5-6) Bone-in chicken thighs or 3-4 boneless chicken breasts
- ½ Tsp. Salt
- ½ Tsp. Black pepper
- 2 Cups chopped onions
- 1¾ Cups chopped carrots
- 1 Cup chopped celery
- 3 Cloves garlic minced
- 6 Cups Chicken broth
- 3 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 Tsp. Dried parsley
- 1 Tsp. Dried thyme
- 2 Bay leaves
- ½ Cup Panko bread crumbs
- 1 Tbsp. Butter

Directions: In a large pot or Dutch oven, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove from pot with slotted spoon and keep in a large bowl. Add sausage to pot and cook 4 minutes or until browned, stirring occasionally. Remove and add to bowl with bacon. Season chicken with salt and pepper and cook in pot until well browned, about 8 min. Remove and add to bowl with bacon and sausage. If using chicken breast, cut into bite sized pieces after cooking. Preheat oven to 350. Add onions, carrots and celery to pot and cook 8 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute. Stir in dry barley, broth, tomato paste, herbs and bay leaves. Stir and bring to a simmer. Add contents of meat bowl. If using bone-in chicken, place it on top with skin exposed. Remove from heat and bake in oven for 1 hour. Mix melted butter with panko and parsley. Sprinkle on top of dish before serving.