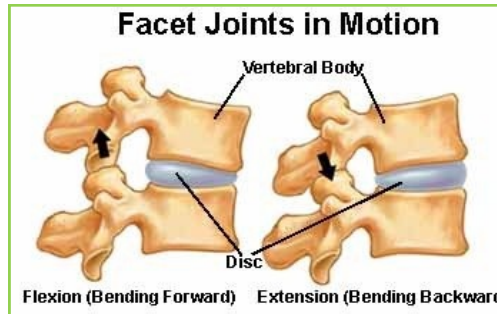
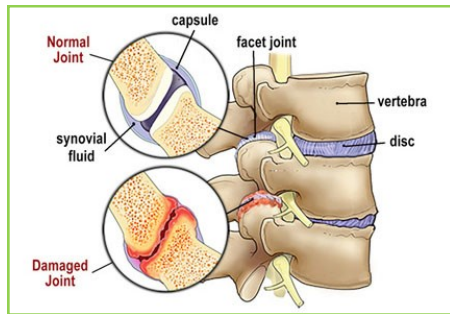


Brostrom Physical Therapy

Facet Joint Syndrome

Contributed by Kathleen (Katie) Dobbie, PT, DPT, CKTP

Facet joints are the joints of the spine. They are quite small and add stabilization to the spine, and are responsible for articulating movement. In the spine, each vertebra has two sets of facet joints. The facet joints are hinged and link each vertebra together. The facet joints are also lined with cartilage that allows more smooth movement. They are responsible for being able to flex, extend, and twist¹.



Because facet joints are in constant motion during spinal movement it is not uncommon for them to wear out. When this happens, the cartilage of the facet joint thins or disappears. This is called facet joint syndrome and/or facet joint disease. Facet joint disorders can be very disabling and have serious symptoms for patients. They are some of the most common recurrent disorders of the spine.

Acute facet joint issues can present like other conditions such as herniated disc, fracture, torn muscle, and even infection. Typically, there will be more pain upon extending backwards than forwards. There may also be point tenderness over the joint with muscle spasms and/or decreased flexibility surrounding it. Some individuals report the pain radiates into their buttocks and/or the back of their thigh.

As indicated above, a thorough examination is necessary to accurately diagnose facet joint syndrome. In addition to a physical examination and medical history, imaging is most effective at seeing the facet joint. An x-ray is most useful, while an MRI is not as effective at assessing the joints themselves². A facet joint injection can also be diagnostic¹. This is when a cortisone and/or anesthetic is injected locally to the facet joint of concern. If the symptoms are resolved it indicates a facet joint problem.

There are also many conservative treatment options. Those include but are not limited to: core stabilization and safe exercise regimen, proper posture, heat/ice during acute flare ups, and modifying daily activities to utilize proper body mechanics. Surgery is a final option but is rare and more dependent on the patients' level of disability. Most patients find they can manage just fine with lifestyle modification, medication, exercise, and postural stability.

Please speak with your Physician if you have additional questions regarding facet joint syndrome. If physical therapy is recommended, we would love to be a part of your care team!



August 2020

Quote of the Month:

"Tough times never last, but tough people do."

~ Robert H. Schuller

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***"Hands-on
treatment you
need with the
care you
deserve."***

Signs of Dehydration:

- ◆ Dry mouth
- ◆ Thirstiness
- ◆ Lack of sweat
- ◆ Muscle cramps
- ◆ Nausea and vomiting
- ◆ Lightheadedness (especially when standing)
- ◆ Weakness
- ◆ Decreased urine output

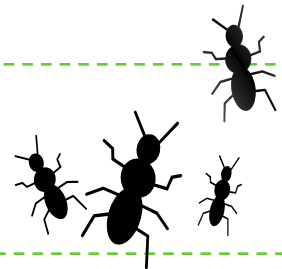


How to stay Hydrated:

- ◆ Drink lots of water!
- ◆ Avoid long exposure to sun or heat
- ◆ Pay attention to your fluid loss

"When the well is dry, we know the worth of water."

Benjamin Franklin



Recipe of the Month— Flavorful Chicken Fajitas

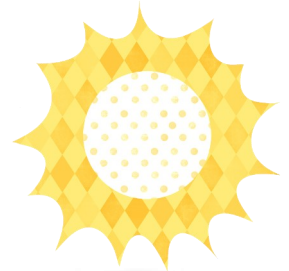
Makes 6 servings | Prep: 20 minutes + 10 minutes marinating cook

Main ingredients:

- ◆ 1 & 1/2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breast, cut into thin strips
- ◆ 1/2 medium sweet red pepper, julienned
- ◆ 1/2 medium green pepper, julienned
- ◆ 4 green onions, thinly sliced
- ◆ 1/2 cup chopped onion
- ◆ 6 flour tortillas (8 inches), warmed

Optional toppings:

- ◆ Shredded cheddar cheese
- ◆ Taco sauce
- ◆ Salsa
- ◆ Guacamole
- ◆ Sour cream



Ingredients (chicken seasoning):

- ◆ 2 Tablespoons canola oil
- ◆ 2 Tablespoons lemon juice
- ◆ 1 & 1/2 teaspoons seasoned salt
- ◆ 1 & 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano
- ◆ 1 & 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
- ◆ 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)

Preparation:

- ◆ In a large bowl, combine 2 tablespoons oil, lemon juice, and seasonings; add the chicken. Turn to coat; cover. Refrigerate for 1-4 hours.
- ◆ In a large cast-iron or other heavy skillet, sauté peppers and onions in remaining oil until crisp-tender. Remove and keep warm.
- ◆ Drain chicken, discarding marinade. In the same skillet, cook chicken over medium-high heat until no longer pink (roughly 5-6 minutes). Return pepper mixture to pan; heat through.
- ◆ Spoon filling down center of tortillas; fold in half. desired, serve with toppings.

Recipe credit to: <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/flavorful-chicken-fajitas/>