

# Shocking results

The constant feeling of pins and needles is the reality for many. There are people who suffer from severe joint pain, arthritis and injuries. For those of us who suffer from one of these issues, there is a solution: physical therapy.

Almost three years ago, my knee popped out of place and since then I have suffered from severe pain in my knees. I visited several doctors, tried numerous remedies but my pain was not getting better. That was until late last year when I finally got an appointment with a professional in joint pain. He got me an appointment to try physical therapy (PT) for six weeks. At first, I was skeptical because I thought that it would not help, but I discovered that I was wrong.

The first part of my physical therapy was normal with stretches and using different pieces of workout equipment to strengthen my knees, but I found it odd when they told me that I would attach electrodes to my knees.

Many physical therapists have started using electrical stimulation for their patients. When I first learned that I was going to be shocked as part of my PT, I was worried. But, after the first time I did it, I saw immediate improvement. I walked out of my first session already feeling 10 times better than when I walked in.

[Electrical stimulation](#) can be used for inflammation, contracted or weak muscles and pain or spasms. There are many types of electrical stimulation, but the one that I used was [Transcutaneous Electrical Neuromuscular Stimulation \(TENS\)](#). This is used to decrease pain by sending electrodes into painful areas of the body.

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It is important that when you have your first evaluation to

ask the physical therapist about any contradictions pertaining to electrical stimulation.”

– Salem Karr

Although electrical stimulation works for most people, there are still risks. You could experience a muscle tear, skin irritation or tissue burn. This means that you have to be careful about the intensity of your electrodes and never do more than you can handle. Electrical stimulation should never be painful; however, if it is, you should lower the setting before you hurt yourself.

Of course, with every type of treatment, there are certain circumstances in which electrical stimulation should not be used.

It is necessary to see a professional if you begin to experience pain either from an injury or just randomly. Your pain needs to be checked out to make sure that nothing is wrong, and if there is, it is important to get help before it gets worse.

If you have to start physical therapy, do not be afraid. It is almost always effective and if it is, you will feel much better than you did before. Thanks to my PT, I have only used my knee braces once since I started, and I hope to never use them again.

I have finally finished my physical therapy, and while I still have some days where my pain is bad, most days I feel little to no pain.

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# Baking away the stress

She whisks the yolks as she hums a soft melody, flour covering her shirt. Her mind is calm for the first time in weeks, her only worry being if she remembered to spray cooking oil in the bundt pan.

My friends say that I'm "such a Paula Deen," but baking is just something I've always enjoyed doing. It started in my childhood with my first Easy-Bake Oven. The undercooked brownies I baked under the lightbulb brought smiles to my family's faces. I still remember my little apron, one of the first feelings of accomplishment in my life.

Sure, baking is no great feat, but it can be. Baking has become an outlet for me. It releases weeks of pent-up anxiety and frustration. It turns my overwhelming load of schoolwork and my Advanced Placement schedule into something better. Something sweet.

I've had anxiety problems since middle school, and very few things possess the ability to truly calm me down. Sometimes it's hard for me to cope with my lack of sleep and want for a social life on top of my schoolwork and extracurricular activities. Staying on top of my education is a tough job to do, but my worries seem to disappear when I'm mixing up a bowl of cookie dough.

There are plenty of ways to handle stress. Anything that is healthy and productive, while also being wholesome and fulfilling, is something that I would call a good coping skill.

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Baking has become an outlet for me. It releases weeks of pent-up anxiety and frustration.”

– Murry

I have begun to realize how my worries melted away during holiday baking the Christmas of my sophomore year. I was busy rolling apple wedges into crescent rolls for dumplings and realized that nothing else mattered in that moment. I was focused on the dough and fruit in front of me.

My skills have grown since my discovery of this anti-anxiety agent. I can remember an attempt at making a boxed brownie recipe and ending up with rocks. I've learned how to make more than stones, now. Instead of using boxed powders, I now prefer making baked goods from scratch. There's more of an opportunity to experiment with different flavors and ingredients when you take the time to make a recipe your own.

When you sift your own flour and make your own batter, the problems that stress you out practically disappear. With the mess in the kitchen needing to be cleaned and the cookies in the oven, there's no time for thinking about anything else.

The feeling of accomplishment that I get when I see people enjoying the things I have made can only be described as heartwarming. Baking has been my go-to stress reliever, and I would recommend it to anyone in need.