

# Feel-Good Medicine

Elite Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy provides patients with top-of-the-line therapy and preventative care.

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When you think of physical therapy, it's easy to associate the form of rehabilitation with exercise. Most people think of physical therapy as something people use when they have been injured on the sports field or after suffering a traumatic injury.

While it can be all those things, the highly trained staff at Elite Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy want you to know that it is also so much more. Physical therapy can be an effective way to treat chronic pain, such as lower back pain, and can be used to help prevent injuries before they occur.

The center, located at 13157 State Line Road, specializes in treating orthopedic pain related to muscles, joints and nerves. Working with one of the 12 certified physical therapists at the center can help clients relieve nagging back pain—an often complex and challenging problem—or soreness in the knees, hips or elbows.

Under the skillful direction of the physical therapists, clients address problems not only with exercise but also through manual therapy, a technique that can mobilize soft tissue and joints to improve posture, decrease pain or increase motion. Owner and founder Biagio Mazza says therapists often look at posture and a client's lifestyle to determine whether certain movements or motions are causing or contributing to a larger problem.

"Trying to figure out what is the underlying movement or problem is really what we focus on," Mazza says.

Elite Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy also specializes in helping people get well who may not have had much luck with physicians or other physical therapy centers.

"There is a difference between how physical therapy is done from one center to another," he says.

That sentiment was evident in the recent case of a 14-year-old athlete who was treated at the center. After enduring eight months of doctor's appointments with four different physicians and visits to two physical therapists, the young athlete was still



Biagio Mazza



experiencing intense back pain. A visit to an additional physician and one more referral brought the athlete and his family to Elite Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy, where he received a two-hour initial assessment.

After he began the back therapy regimen designed by one of the center's physical therapists, the young athlete's pain began to diminish over just a few sessions. By the end of the therapy, the young man was 95 percent pain-free and could try out for a freshman football team.

"That was pretty amazing," Mazza says.

Mazza attributes the success of his center to the personal attention each client receives from the moment they walk in the door. Each client works one-on-one with the same physical therapist throughout his or her therapy. Clients aren't shuffled around between the therapists or passed to physical therapy aides or students.

Another unique aspect of Elite Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy is the highly trained and dedicated staff. All physical therapists complete a training program with Judy Hensley, Mazza's own mentor, before they begin at the center.

The training helps the therapists provide a consistent standard of care across the clinic and ensures that all employees embrace the same philosophy. All the therapists also hold either a master's or doctorate degree in physical therapy and many have other board certifications as well.

Mazza received education in physical therapy from Rockhurst University and is certified by the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialists as an orthopedic clinical specialist and a sports clinical specialist.

He worked in both a hospital setting and private practice before deciding four years ago that he wanted to open his physical therapy





clinic. The center also has a wellness program that includes personal training, weight-loss and sports-performance assistance.

The center began with just Mazza and a business manager, but throughout the last four years, the business has grown to 12 physical therapists and expanded to a 3,500-square-foot location.

While some physical therapy clinics open more locations as business grows, Mazza said his goal is to have one clinic that is the best that it can be.

Clients who visit the center need a medical referral to begin treatment, but Mazza says he hopes those in Johnson County remember his business when they begin to feel those aches and pains.

“If you have pain that is stopping you from your everyday activities, then you’re an appropriate candidate for physical therapy,” he says. ❖

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