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Meet our Therapist

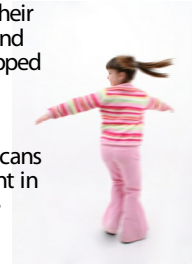
Jeff Ray, PT (Ray PT/Fort Collins)



Jeff Ray has been working as a Physical Therapist in Fort Collins for over 25 years, since graduating from the University of Colorado at Denver in 1980 with a B.A. in Biology and then in 1981 from the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center with a B.S. in Physical Therapy. He has worked with Poudre Valley Hospital, the Fort Collins Orthopaedic Associates (as Chief PT), and assisted with the transition of the Fort Collins Orthopaedic Associates into the Orthopaedic Center of the Rockies where he helped design the PT department. Jeff then joined Associates in Physical Therapy as a partner where he remained for 9 years. In April 2001, Jeff founded his own practice, Ray Physical Therapy, P.C. which merged with Foothills Orthopedic & Sport Therapy, P.C. in October 2008.

Jeff is a member of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). He has served as Treasurer for the Colorado Chapter of APTA, and has sat on the Judiciary/Ethics Committee. Jeff has a strong clinical background with orthopedic and sport injuries. His emphasis is in extremity and spine (neck & back) injuries. Jeff also does medical bicycle fitting.

Almost everyone experiences a few seconds of dizziness at some point in their lives. Do you remember your childhood days when you would spin round and round until you got dizzy and had to wait a few seconds till the "world stopped spinning"? It was fun back then, but when it occurs "out of the blue", it's something to be concerned about.



According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), about 90 million Americans (more than a third of the population) report bouts of dizziness at some point in their lives. Of those, 76 million suffer from inner-ear disorders, which can be caused by:

1. Whiplash (neck injuries)
2. Blows to the head
3. Viral infections
4. High doses of certain antibiotics
5. Stroke
6. Degeneration of the inner ear's balance function, also known as the vestibular system (often deteriorates with age).



Inner-ear problems can manifest themselves in different ways. Some symptoms include dizziness, nausea and blurred vision

It's not uncommon for individuals with dizziness to go from one doctor to another in an attempt to find a solution.

Leaving You Dizzy

The feeling of spinning / rocking and constant nausea can literally turn your life upside down.

Frequent episodes of dizziness (especially with certain head movements) are a sign of dysfunction in your inner ear. This dizziness can last a few seconds, minutes or even days. Symptoms of inner ear disorders may be mild (lasting only seconds or minutes) or severe (resulting in total disability).



Common causes include:

- Inner ear disorder or ear infection
- Flu or the common cold
- Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV). This is common and may be accompanied by hearing loss and muscle weakness
- Ear infection, head injury and whiplash are common in younger individuals.

According to the NIH, 85% of equilibrium problems have to do with the inner ear. Other causes include a stroke, multiple sclerosis, seizures and brain tumors.

Supervised Exercise: Your Treatment For Dizziness

Exercise might not be the first thing you think about when it comes to treating dizziness or vertigo, but it plays a crucial role.

Call our office and we'll help you get the right diagnosis by evaluating you or referring you to the appropriate doctor.

If problems with the inner ear are due to a virus or physical damage, physical therapy can be beneficial. **Be warned** – the first few days of exercise might make the dizziness worse before it starts to get better. In this case, physical therapy can essentially "recalibrate" the inner ear system. Talk to one of our highly qualified physical therapists to determine how we can help you.



A Word of Caution:

If any of the following apply to you, CALL YOUR DOCTOR:

- You experience dizziness without warning
- Some medicines cause you to feel dizzy
- Your previous symptoms are different now – they last longer or feel worse than before
- You experience hearing loss

An avid cyclist, Jeff rides his bike to work everyday in rain, wind, snow or shine. He presently races for the Vitamin Cottage/Natural Grocer's team. He also enjoys bicycle touring with his younger brother. Jeff's wife Kristy is a Red Cross Disaster instructor and FEMA reservist. Their daughter Erin recently graduated from CSU and plans to go to nursing school.

As a patient, you always have the choice of where to go for your Physical Therapy treatment. Most insurances allow you to refer yourself. Make sure that you always see a Licensed Therapist, because not all clinics are the same. We welcome the opportunity to be the clinic of choice for you, your family, friends.

If you suffer from dizziness and also have any of the following, call 911 or go to the emergency room:

- Head injury
- Fever over 101°F or 38°C
- Convulsions or ongoing vomiting
- Chest pain, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, inability to move an arm or leg or change in vision or speech
- Fainting and loss of consciousness

Dizziness is NOT something you should be taking lightly. As qualified professionals, we are here to help and will stand by your side to help you recover from this limiting condition.

How Can a CHAIR Save Your Spine?

In a 21st century office, work typically involves a lot of sitting in an office chair (usually in front of a computer).

Did you know that sitting actually puts more stress on your spine than standing?

To avoid developing lower back problems, it's critical to use an office chair that's ergonomically designed. What does **ergonomics** mean? It is the applied science of equipment design (in the workplace) intended to maximize productivity by reducing an individual's fatigue and discomfort. An ergonomic chair, for example, is one that supports your lower back and helps maintain good posture.



The big question is - How do we identify the ideal ergonomic office chair?

All ergonomic chairs are not built the same. Since every individual is built differently, it is best to look for a chair that can be easily adjusted in terms of chair height, armrest height and back inclination. There are many types of office chairs and no single chair is the best, but a few simple tips can save your joints a lot of discomfort. You are about to avoid the **biggest mistakes** most individuals make with chair selection. If you have any doubts, always speak with your physical therapist to help you find the right chair for your specific needs.

Five KEY Factors For Identifying an Ergonomic Office Chair

Five key factors to consider while choosing an ergonomic chair:

- **Seat height.** This should be adjustable. Depending on your height, this should be between 16 to 21 inches from the floor. When sitting, your feet should be flat on the floor and your thighs horizontal (or parallel) to the floor.
- **Seat width and depth.** Standard seat width is 17-20 inches. The depth (from the front to the back of the seat) needs to be enough so that you can sit with your back against the backrest with about 2-4 inches between the back of the knees and the seat of the chair. The forward or backward tilt of the seat should be adjustable because the right inclination can significantly reduce the strain on your lower back (**call us to learn more**)
- **Backrest.** The ideal backrest should be 12 to 19 inches wide. It should be able to support the natural curve of the spine. The more we sit, the more we tend to slouch. **Therefore, proper lumbar support provided by your chair's backrest is very important to help support your spine.**
- **Armrests.** Office chair armrests should be adjustable. They should allow your arms to rest comfortably and shoulders to be relaxed. The elbows and lower arms should rest lightly, which means the armrests should neither be too high nor too low.
- **Swivel.** This allows you to easily rotate to reach different areas of your desk without straining your spine.



Picking the right office chair can help you avoid the agony of low back pain or neck pain associated with full-time desk jobs. Too much time at the computer or several hours a day on the phone can also put your spine at risk. **To learn more about ergonomics and correct body mechanics, give us a call right away.**

If you want to receive this monthly newsletter by e-mail, please let us know by calling (970) 667-7755 or e-mail foothillsandrayptc@gmail.com.

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