

FOR THE WIN

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Message from Dr. Fralich

Welcome to May!

This month brings a wonderful mix of celebration and reflection with Cinco de Mayo, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and marks milestones like graduations and weddings. It's a season full of connection, happiness, and new beginnings—and at Northwest Sports and Exercise Medicine, we're celebrating right alongside you.

We continue to take pride in our patients' successes and are excited to share some new updates! Our website now features powerful patient testimonial videos showcasing their recovery journeys with shockwave therapy using Stemwave. We're also thrilled to celebrate the incredible progress seen with platelet-rich plasma (PRP) and alpha-2 macroglobulin (A2M) for osteoarthritis, and Tenex for stubborn chronic calcific tendinopathy—treatments that have helped our patients return to pain-free activity.

Looking ahead, we're excited to announce that starting in mid-June, **we will offer minimally invasive ultrasound-guided carpal tunnel release using Sonex technology**, which can help patients return to work and their favorite activities in less than a week.

As we step into May, I encourage you to take time to enjoy the outdoors—go for a hike, a walk, or try something new. Celebrating small wins, practicing gratitude, and embracing new challenges boosts dopamine (a happy neurotransmitter) levels, mood, cognitive function, confidence, and overall well-being.

Here's to a healthy, happy, and celebratory May!

Yours in Health,

Dr. Fralich



Patient Spotlight - *Brett Rauchle*

For over 30 years, I've led a highly active lifestyle that includes skiing, snowboarding, hiking, swimming, motocross, yardwork/property maintenance, construction and electrical work.

I began experiencing extreme pain in my left shoulder, especially when reaching overhead or even with random arm movements. I had a moderately difficult time doing simple things, such as putting on a shirt or jacket. I was unable to do any repetitive motions without my shoulder hurting. Unfortunately, this meant not only not being able to do the things I enjoy (skiing, hiking, swimming & motocross), but also not being able to go to work or even work at home on our property. The nature of my job not only requires repetitive motions with my arms, but I also oftentimes need to do overhead work for long periods of time, both of which would cause

me pain. I was also unable to do physically demanding work on my property (which prior to my shoulder injury I had no difficulty doing).

Leading an active lifestyle, whether it be for work or pleasure, is extremely important to me. So being unable to be active was very difficult for me, not only physically, but emotionally as well. When you're used to being very active much of your life and suddenly unable to do any of that...it's very challenging.

I underwent Ultrasonic Tenotomy by Dr. Fralich to remove calcium buildup in my shoulder joint. The pain relief was immediate. Thanks to Dr. Fralich and her team, in addition to physical therapy, I am well on my way to returning to all the activities I enjoy (and those I don't necessarily "enjoy" either... like working)! ;)

Dr. Fralich is one of the best and most caring providers I have ever met. It's obvious that she really cares, not only about your acute injury, but also about your overall health and well-being. This is extremely hard to find in today's medical world.

I would be happy to recommend the clinic to anybody that wants to stay active. Dr. Fralich and the entire team at Northwest Sports & Exercise Medicine do everything they can to not only help you through your immediate time of injury, but they also want to help you improve your quality of life long-term. I love that about this clinic because there aren't very many providers out there like that these days.

Dr. Fralich is exceptional and one in a million. She and the entire team put care above profits and will do what is in the patient's best interest, all of which is *extremely* rare for today's medical providers. I just can't recommend them enough!!

The Health Benefits of Hiking and Spending Time in Nature

By Shay Hannigan-Luther

As the weather warms up in May, my weekends often start filling with hiking trips. Spending time outdoors has long been an important part of my life—and hiking, in particular, remains one of my favorite ways to recharge. I know I'm not alone in this; many of our patients share their own stories about getting back to the trails or planning their next outdoor adventure.

For those who love hiking, the health benefits may feel obvious. You return from a walk in the woods feeling calmer, more clear-headed, and maybe even physically stronger. But beyond personal experience, these benefits have been widely studied—and science continues to confirm what many hikers already know.

Simply spending time in nature, whether you're walking, sitting, or just breathing in the fresh air, has been associated with several mental health benefits. These include lower levels of

cortisol (a biological marker of stress) and improved mood. Time outdoors has also been linked to lower levels of anxiety and depression, improved focus, and a greater sense of emotional restoration.

Interestingly, these benefits appear even without physical activity. Just being in a natural setting can help calm the nervous system and restore mental clarity. While the optimal "dose" of nature is still unclear, a 2019 study found that people who spent at least 120 minutes a week in nature reported better subjective health and well-being.

When you add physical activity like hiking into the mix, the health benefits grow even further. As an aerobic activity, hiking helps improve cardiovascular fitness, supports healthy weight management and promotes better sleep, which may decrease the risk of obesity and associated chronic illnesses such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Hiking can be adapted for nearly all fitness levels, making it a sustainable and accessible form of exercise for many people—including those recovering from injury or looking for low-impact options.

Even if you don't think of yourself as an avid hiker, we're lucky to live in a region filled with accessible trails and beautiful green spaces. Whether you head out for a day-long trek to an alpine lake or a 20-minute stroll along the Centennial Trail, spring is the perfect time to reconnect with nature and move your body. We encourage you to make time for outdoor activity this season—your mind and body will thank you!



Good 'n Healthy

By Dr. Fralich

Pineapple Smoothie

1.5 cups	Almond milk, unsweetened or vanilla
1 whole	Banana

2 cups Frozen pineapple chunks
2 tbsp Honey
1/4 tsp Vanilla extract
1/2 tsp Cinnamon
Optional: Add fresh spinach

In a blender, mix together all ingredients. Add ice (for thicker consistency), blend and enjoy!

Upcoming Events

Sports Performance & Leadership Summit

When: *Rescheduling, New Date TBD*

Where: Gonzaga Preparatory High School

Who: All Athletes Grades 9 - 12

<https://www.spalsummit.com/>

Podcasts

Spotify - What's Right With Healthcare

Amazon Music - What's Right With Healthcare

iHeart Radio - What's Right With Healthcare

Apple - What's Right With Healthcare



<https://www.instagram.com/laura.fralichmd>



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