



ACTION

PHYSICAL THERAPY & SPORTS MEDICINE



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COVER**



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This month, we are turning the spotlight on our owner, Gary Dragon, Jr., PT, DPT.

A sports-enthusiast, Gary loves being a part of athletic competition. If he isn't on the court or field, he enjoys being a spectator of the game. At one time, he planned on becoming a high school coach.

During his high school days at Pope John Paul II in Slidell, Gary excelled in baseball, soccer, tennis, and cross country. He "cut his first teeth" for athletic training at Southeastern Louisiana University when he was given the chance to be on the sidelines, assisting their teams. He quickly moved on to LSU to work closely with their football, baseball and soccer teams there. It was quite the experience for him being in the dugout or on those sidelines; but, the role of trainer and therapist grew to capacity in his college days.

Fascinated with the idea of physically rehabilitating the athlete, career goals quickly shifted from coaching to the field

of sports medicine and therapy, with safety being his key to care.

After eleven years of post-secondary schooling - gaining his bachelor's from LSU, then a masters, and ultimately his doctorate in Physical Therapy from St. Augustine University - Gary was determined to become the PT of choice in his field. His first stint as a PT was in Galiano for a few years, then Metairie, until finally finding his way back to Slidell working for Superior Rehab, LLC. In 2005, he made the bold move to purchase the business and never looked back, giving it a new life as Action Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine. This included a change in location from Brownswitch Road to its current fixture at S. Military Road at E. Gause Blvd.

Gary's specializes in and is a Certified Manual Therapist. He most recently updated his certification with "Fit to the Tee," a golf conditioning program designed to enhance one's performance on the course.

Unlike most clinics where patients perform activity on several stations then leave, Dragon ensures that a licensed therapist spends one-on-one time with every patient at every visit. Offering manual touch at each appointment gives the therapist a sense of any dysfunctions in the body and a patient the opportunity to feel and question any concerns about their progress and healing.

Ever the business mind, Gary would add: "Action Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine takes pride in how we rehabilitate, strengthen and heal our patients. Manual therapy, we believe, is key and will be implemented at every visit. Along with our personal approach, our state-of-the-art methods will enhance your healing. We have

therapists who specialize in shoulders, knees, dance anatomy injuries, scoliosis, headaches and athletic injuries;. We offer electric stimulation, resistance, medicine balls, cupping, and dry needling as available options towards pain relief and in therapy here."

Where it all began.....

Gary's beginnings trace back to Chalmette, LA. Just after he completed kindergarten, his family made the decision to move to Slidell. Gary is one of three sons in a family of five children. His mother and father raised them to appreciate what life brings, hold onto your faith, develop a good work ethic and be kind to others. His siblings, all professionals in their own right, reside in St. Tammany Parish still today. Mediocrity was not the norm for Gary growing up, nor is it the case in his career or clinic. He is a determined, educated and humbled therapist who sets the bar high for himself and his staff. Modest about his success, Gary has been chosen East St. Tammany's BEST physical therapist for six years.

Article continues next page



The care and skill that the entire team at Action PT gave me at every visit is uncommon in healthcare today. I would highly recommend Action PT for your rehabilitation following injury or surgery.

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His practice proudly holds a near perfect 5-star Google review; and his staff emanates professionalism and only the top level of compassion for patients because of his leadership and example. Over 5,000+ patients have come through the doors of Action PT over the 20 years of existence under Dragon's ownership. One, if not the most highly recommended physical therapists in the area, Gary treats everyone who walks into his facility with respect and like family. "You just don't find that kind of personality and kindness (what we used to call a good bedside manner) anymore in medicine," states a former patient.

Dragon met his wife, Melissa, while working as a PT in Metairie. They grew in love and are married for 21 years now. The couple owns Action PT and co-owns CORE Performance Academy - a conditioning and athletic training facility adjacent to the gym. Since 2003, the couple has built these thriving businesses in the city of Slidell, and are blessed to be able to serve the immediate and surrounding St. Tammany community and beyond. They have three beautiful children who, by the way, are very proud of their daddy. In his spare time, Gary enjoys tennis, camping, grilling, swimming, golf, and coaching his children. The girls, Mary Grace and Katie think their "dad is such a funny guy," while son, Gary III believes his daddy is "a great baseball coach."

A few words from the staff:

"Good people are hard to find, but good bosses are 1,000 times harder to find in a world of narcissists, and money-hungry, micro-managers. He is great to work for and with and needs to TOOT his horn more often."

"He is supportive and patient; a gentleman who expects honesty and professionalism in return for the trust he has in all of us."

"He exudes work ethic and compassion for all; and, we share these sentiments."

"Gary has a great sense of humor, is surprisingly a picky eater and has a deep passion to heal others."

"Here's to a continued successful career and family life to this guy. Be sure to take some time for yourself now and then."



Welcome back, Makayla!



Some of our return patients and former patients will remember Makayla as a PT Tech who worked a few years for us monitoring patient care, their rotations and schedule, and seeing that all equipment remained sanitary and in proper condition. We are happy to have her return to us following the completion of PTA school. Makayla is currently studying to complete her boards and finalize her degree from Delgado. For now, she is training under the eyes of Dr. Dragon and able to see patients at our clinic. We will be able to welcome her back in a full-time capacity this fall.

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF STAYING HYDRATED

If you don't intake enough daily fluids, you might experience the opposite of hydration, or what is known as dehydration. This is caused by losing more of your body's water than you are taking in. Even losing as little as 1.5% of your body's water can cause symptoms. While it is important to quench your thirst as soon as you feel it, if you're thirsty, you're already dehydrated.

Over 43% of Americans drink less than the recommended minimum of 4 cups of water a day, with 7% claiming that they don't drink water at all. If you asked those closest to you, oftentimes they too would argue that they probably don't drink enough water. Drinking enough water and staying hydrated throughout the day is an important part of staying healthy, which is why we all need to do a better job of prioritizing how much water we consume per day. Nearly every system in the body relies on water to function, but this is just one of the many reasons it can be beneficial to keep yourself properly hydrated. Water also plays a key role in how our body heals from injuries and fights off illness. Over 60% of the human body is composed of water which makes it an essential part of your health and overall well-being



Hydration is the process of how your body absorbs liquids, most often water. The level of hydration you should aim to reach depends on many personal factors, such as your weight, activity level, location, and overall health. If a person is active or located in a warmer climate like Louisiana, the recommended amount of fluid intake increases. There are many factors that go into the exact number of cups of water you should consume daily, which is why experts have tried to come up with a few helpful methods throughout the years for people to remember how many cups to have per day. One such example is the tried and true recommendation of always consuming at least 8 cups of water per day. While water is the most common liquid for hydration, there are other drinks that can be beneficial. If you are wanting something more flavorful than plain water, there are alternatives you can use to add to your intake, including: zero or no-calorie beverages. Black coffee, tea, flavored, or seltzer water are options. Higher

intensity athletes and those who participate in more than 60 minutes of moderate physical activity should consider drinking sports drinks in addition to plain water in order to replace the carbohydrates and electrolytes that are lost during a workout. *Sugary sodas and energy drinks actually have the opposite effect on hydration*, so it's important to make sure what you're consuming is beneficial to your health and doesn't act as a diuretic that causes water loss as opposed to retention.

There is no shortage of benefits for staying hydrated and making sure that you're getting the recommended amount of water per day with the guidance of your healthcare professional. One of the most important benefits of staying hydrated is that it helps your body function and complete its natural tasks. In addition to keeping systems like the circulatory system running, there are many other benefits of staying hydrated, including:

WEIGHT LOSS: For those who are struggling to lose weight, drinking a large glass of water before meals can help prevent overeating. Whenever hunger strikes, try drinking water before you grab a snack. In some cases, you aren't actually hungry, you are just dehydrated. Drinking water before a meal can often act like an appetite suppressant and make you think you're feeling full while eating, thus eating less in the long run. Water can also help you improve your metabolism.

JOINT HEALTH: Water helps lubricate your joints, preventing injury and soreness, as well as improving your range of movement.

IMPROVED PERFORMANCE: Another benefit of staying properly hydrated throughout the day is that it can also help improve physical performance. When the body is dehydrated, the ability to perform continuous exercise is diminished and physical performance is impaired.

REDUCES HEADACHES: One of the common reason we suffer headaches is dehydration. Getting a consistent amount of water throughout the day can help to reduce pain above the neck that stems from dehydration.

IMPROVED BRAIN FUNCTION: When you're not getting enough water throughout the day, you might experience a lack of focus. Impaired cognitive function can make recalling important memories difficult, reduce the ability to control one's mood, and impact levels of concentration.

INJURY RECOVERY: Another benefit of staying hydrated is that it can help to speed up recovery from injuries. As we've highlighted earlier, one of the important ways hydration helps our bodies is by helping our circulatory system move nutrients and oxygen throughout the body. This essential process is vital in helping our bodies heal from injuries properly and speed up the recovery process from injuries.



NATIONAL WELLNESS MONTH

AUGUST



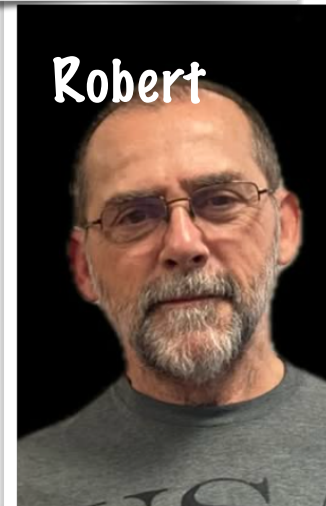
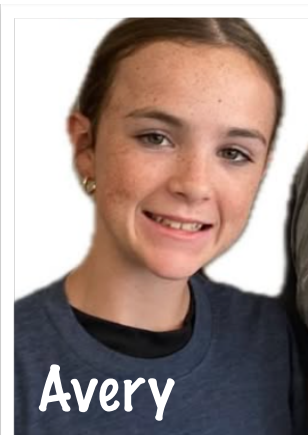
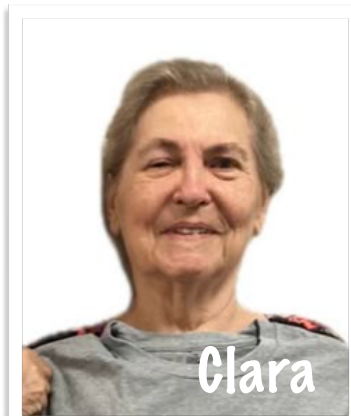
August is National Wellness Month which focuses on practices like: stress management, self-care, implementing healthy routines, and improving your overall health and wellness. National Wellness Month celebrates all the different types of health and healthcare: physical, mental, emotional, *and* spiritual health.

In order to prioritize wellness, consider spending 15-30 minutes per day doing something that you love such as working out, or spending time with friends and family. Consider taking up a hobby that helps you to decompress and take time away from work and/or school. Consider talking to a counselor or therapist to help you discover what to prioritize for your wellbeing.

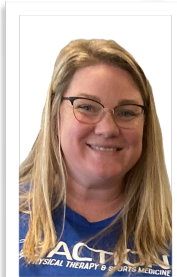
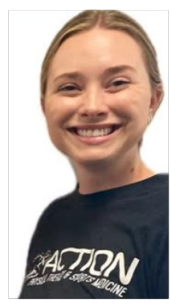
Remember to take good care of YOURSELF !

⚡ WE'RE BACK ⚡ ⚡ IN ACTION ⚡

We are proud to have promoted all of the following patients from therapy as well as those who wished to remain "faceless" since the release of our last, monthly newsletter:



We're working hard to get you BACK into ACTION !!



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5 Star Customer Rating

