**Practice Newsletter** 

25 Wantirna Road **RINGWOOD VIC 3134** 

### PH (03) 9870 8193 www.physica.com.au

**HOURS** 

The practice hours are MON-FRI: 7.00am - 8.00pm

**SAT:** 8.00am - 1pm (Please ring for an appointment)

### **CONDITIONS TREATED**

You can have the following conditions treated at our clinic:-

Manipulative Therapy for the Treatment of:

Spinal Problems

Sports Injuries

Treatment of Neck Related Headaches

Postural Assessment

Treatment of Work Injuries

Treatment of TMJ (Jaw) Problems

### SERVICES AVAILABLE

Some of the services available to you are:-

> Orthotic Assessment & Prescription

Home Visits

Nursing Home/Hostel Visits

Post-operative Rehabilitation

Hydrotherapy

Assessment and Treatment of **Balance Disorders** 

Exercise Prescription and Monitoring of Gym Programmes

Clinical Pilates

Massage and Myotherapy

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Preferred Provider for HBA, MBF and Medibank Private - HICAPS available for most health funds - we bill the health fund for the rebate - you pay gap amount only

Most Cards Accepted

**EFTPOS Facility Available** 

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### Q: Are X-rays risky?

There has been a lot of talk in medical/health circles about the safety of X-rays. Over exposure



to radiation has definite risks, such as developing cancer. Multiple x-rays may not be safe and more advanced modalities such as CT scans cause a lot of radiation exposure. A CT scan is 100-800 times the radiation dose of a chest x-ray. It is estimated that about 30% of radiological tests are unnecessary. Healthcare professionals are being asked to be very careful about ordering x-rays and only ask for them if

### Q: I have painful shins. What should I do?

there is a definite need.

Shin pain ("shin splints") is usually an overuse problem which leads to inflammation of the tissue in the shin and can include the bone. You need to reduce or modify activities such as running or walking (swim or bike ride instead). Foot problems, such as flat feet, can be part of the cause and you may need to re-assess your footwear and perhaps even obtain orthotics. Ice massage, stretching, local physio modalities, anti-inflammatory modalities can all help.

### Q: I fractured my ankle. Do I need physio?

After a fractured ankle, you will often need to go into a plaster or wear a special boot to immobilise and protect the fracture. This may stay on for several weeks. Once they are off, you should start physio ASAP. Regaining movement, muscle strength, co-ordination and learning to walk properly again are all very important.

### 0: I have numbness and burning on the outside of my thiah. What could it be?

The most likely cause is entrapment of one of the nerves supplying the thigh region. The condition is called "meralgia parasthetica". The involved nerve can be trapped in the groin region between various structures. The problem is often related to a large overhanging tummy, tight belts, excessive sitting and pregnancy. Local physio modalities and stretching can help. Often the

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problem will get better spontaneously. Local injections of cortisone and sometimes surgery are required if the problem doesn't improve.



### 0: I have a painful outer hip. What should I do?

Pain on the outside of the hip has often been diagnosed as bursitis? Very often though, it is due to inflammation or damage to the hip tendons in the area. Treatment usually involves stretching and strengthening exercise as well as local physiotherapy modalities. Activity modification is often necessary (e.g. cut down painful activity such as walking). Steroid injections may help. Recently there has been some success with local injections of your own (autologous) blood. It is thought that proteins in the blood increase healing.



### 0: I have an arthritic knee. When should I consider a knee replacement?

There are four parts to this decision. Firstly, you should have marked arthritic changes on x-ray. The second factor is that conservative treatments (e.g. physio, medication etc.) are not helping. The third thing to consider is whether you are severely disabled by the pain (e.g. walking is limited, sleeping disturbed). The final part of the decision is that you cannot cope any more.

### Are you due to have orthópaedic surgery?

After most knee, shoulder, hip. back and other joint surgery you **SHOULD** be having physiotherapy to enhance your recovery. Ask your surgeon when you should nence this (usually as soon as possible) You can also request that you have your physiotherapy

### Referring others to our clinic

If you know someone with any of the problems outlined in this newsletter, please let him or her know about our clinic. We are very grateful for any referrals we receive and we will endeavour to provide patients referred to us with the highest quality of care. Physiotherapy offers a safe, gentle and effective treatment approach for a variety of conditions

> The information in this newsletter is for general patient interest. If you have a problem you should get it properly assessed by your physiotherapist or family doctor.



# PHYSIOTHERAPIST

**Practice Newsletter** 

YOU'VE HURT YOUR NECK

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Neck pain is very common. In most physiotherapy

clinics it ranks second behind low back pain in the

number of people seeking help. About two thirds

of people will experience neck pain at some time.

Prevalence is highest in middle age, with women

being affected more than men. Here are some

tips and information that might help you if you

If you hurt yourself (e.g. at work or in the garden), stop

the activity immediately. Pushing on may make a minor

If the pain lingers for more than 48 hours, have it

assessed by your physiotherapist or family doctor. Most

cases of neck pain are not serious but early assessment

and treatment can reduce the time it takes to get better.

Ask your family doctor or pharmacist about medication.

Paracetamol (e.g. Panadol) is often the best first line

type of medication. Stronger medication may be

required if this doesn't help, or the problem is more

Injuries often take 2-6 weeks to heal. Often the acute

This means you need to take it really easy for a couple of

days after injury and then gradually get back to activity.

A lot of people constantly provoke their neck injury by

If you re-injure your neck, the process starts again and

you will need to realise that the 6 week recovery phase

actually begins from the last time you hurt yourself, not

During this 6 week recovery phase you should pace

yourself. This means carrying out activity but not

For example, if an hour of computer work makes your

neck feel sore, only use the computer for 30 minutes at

a time and then have a short rest. The same goes with

You need to be careful for 6 weeks after the injury.

IT WILL TAKE A FEW WEEKS TO GET BETTER

inflammation remains for 48-72 hours.

from the first time you injured yourself.

exercise, work, gardening and so on.

STAY ACTIVE BUT MODIFY YOUR ACTIVITY

hurt your neck.

STOP THE ACTIVITY

injury more serious.

HAVE IT ASSESSED

MEDICATION

not being careful.

provoking your neck pain.

severe.

**SUMMER 2010** 

### Dear Patient,

Welcome to our newsletter and thanks for coming to see us for your physio needs.

Your ongoing health is very important to all of us here at the clinic. We hope that this newsletter will help keep you up to date with information about physio-related health matters that may be of interest to you and people you know. We hope you enjoy it!

If you have any queries, please call us. If you, or someone you know, have a physio related problem, please call us. We would be more than happy to help you out in any way we can.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to your family and friends.

With kind regards

The Physiotherapists and Staff at

### PHYSICA SPINAL & PHYSIOTHERAPY CLINIC

### **PHYSIOTHERAPISTS**

The physiotherapists working at this clinic are:-

**Warwick James** Dip. P.E., Dip. Phys, Grad. Dip. Manip. Therapy

### **Gregory Collis-Brown**

M. Manipulative Phty

### **Darren Ross**

M. Manipulative Phty.

### **Andrew Seymour**

B. Phty, M. Manipulative Phty.

### **Chris Tubb**

B. Physiotherapy M.Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy

### Anthony D'Aloisio

**Carlos Bello** 

### B. Physiotherapy

**Kate Walters** 

### Massage and Myotherapy **Daniel Zwolak**

B. Physiotherapy M.Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy

### **Daniel Geilings**

Sian Percy

In time, most neck injuries get better. The proportion of people in whom neck pain becomes chronic depends on the cause, but is thought to be about 10%, a similar proportion to low back pain. Neck pain causes severe disability in 5% of affected people. Also, the rate of recurrence is high during the first 12 months after an injury. Having physio treatment can enhance recovery and help stop recurrence.



### **USING A CERVICAL COLLAR**

Routine use of a cervical collar for acute neck pain is not usually encouraged. Having said this, a short trial of a collar can be of assistance in some cases. In general, early return to gentle activity is encouraged as this promotes healing and reduces post injury stiffness and de-conditioning.

In most instances, a spinal X-ray will not be required. They are often of very little diagnostic value and are reserved if a serious pathology is suspected (cancer, fracture, infection etc.) or if you are not getting better in a timely fashion.

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# Are you fit enough for the work that you do?

How increasing your fitness can help you prevent and overcome injury.

Many of us carry out daily tasks at work that place strains on our bodies that we simply are not fit enough to deal with. As a result, we often develop aches, pains and injury. These can all affect our ability to perform work and prevent us carrying out our normal daily activities.



### **HOW TO RECOGNISE THAT** YOU AREN'T FIT FOR YOUR WORK

Do you lack strength? Do you have poor flexibility? Do you struggle standing for long periods? Do you puff when you have been walking around? Are you overweight? Do you feel sore or achy as the day goes on? Do you have recurrent or chronic injury problems? If so, these may indicate that you need to improve your "work fitness'.

### TREAT WORK LIKE SPORT

Work is an important part of our lives yet many of us do less preparation for it than we do for our sport. If you perform work that involves heavy lifting, prolonged walking, bending and moving or even sitting at a computer; you need to carry out some form of training, so that you are fit for work.

**HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOU TRAIN AND** WHAT TYPES OF THINGS SHOULD YOU DO To achieve and maintain a basic level of fitness vou need to train 2-3 times per week. Here are some things you could do:-

❖ Stretching ❖ Cardiovascular activity like walking, jogging, bike or stepper. Weight training Core stability training

### WHO TO SPEAK TO

If you have an injury, you should definitely tailor your fitness work around your injury so that you overcome it quickly and prevent recurrence. For general fitness, enrol at a good gym or see a personal trainer. You can obtain a program to do at home if time is a problem. Purchasing some simple exercise equipment might be worthwhile if you can't get to a gym. Your physiotherapist can help you with general fitness advice and helping to design a fitness program.

## Did you know?

Three-hundred-million cells die in the human body every minute

# WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR TISSUE WHEN YOU ARE INJURED?

When you injury soft tissue (muscle, ligament, tendon etc.), you go through several phases of healing. Understanding this process will help you deal with your injury more effectively and optimise your recovery.

### PHASE 1—ACUTE INFLAMMATION

In the first 72 hours after injury, the injured area bleeds and is flooded with inflammatory cells. These cells get rid of damaged tissue and foreign objects such as bacteria. These cells also start laying down scar tissue to repair the damaged tissue. Often the injured part will be swollen, warm and red during this phase. Heat, alcohol, activity and massage during this phase will increase blood flow and make swelling and bleeding worse. Ice, compression and rest will all reduce swelling and bleeding during this phase.

### PHASE 2- REPAIR (2DAYS -6 WEEKS)

The body rapidly lays down scar tissue to repair the injured tissue. By six weeks the scar should be fairly strong. This is why six weeks off sport/ activity is often recommended after injury. This gives the body time to lay down adequate scar tissue and for this tissue to be strong enough to withstand loads.

### PHASE 3-REMODELLING/MATURATION

This scar tissue will take a further 6-12 months to mature so that it can be as normal as possible. It will never be exactly the same as pre-injured tissue. This is why you still need to be careful for quite a while after an injury. For example, it is a good idea to tape your ankle for several months after an ankle sprain. Many people suffer one or more recurrences in the first 12 months after an injury because the scar tissue has not matured.



### MUSCLE DE-CONDITIONING

This is a big problem after injury. Muscles are inhibited by pain and swelling. Disuse can lead to wasting and reduced strength. If this is allowed to happen, it can take months to recover.

### **POORLY ORGANISED SCAR TISSUE**

Scar tissue grows better and quicker if the injured part is lightly stressed. Complete rest is not good and may lead to long term problems. Very gentle exercise and activity can be beneficial.

### **ADHESIONS**

Adhesions are abnormal scar fibres that stick different tissues together (e.g. muscle to muscle, muscle to fat and so on). They can be minimised by early movement and exercise.

### **JOINT STIFFNESS**

Studies have show that joints deteriorate and become arthritic if immobilised for even short periods. Early exercise and movement, performed correctly, can help minimise

Applying appropriate first aid (see page 3) and visiting a physiotherapist following injury can enhance your recovery.

# What types of conditions can a physiotherapist help you with?

Many patients are unaware of the many conditions that can benefit from physiotherapy. Below is a list of some of the common problems that we help deal with:-

- Back and neck pain
- Headaches
- Sprained ankles
- Injured knees
- ❖ Arthritic pain and stiffness ❖ Shoulder pain ❖ Tennis elbows ❖ Tendon problems ❖ Muscle tears ❖ Hand and foot problems ❖ Bruising ❖ Fractures
- ❖ After joint replacements ❖ After joint and bone surgery

If you have any of the above problems, and you want to improve as quickly as possible, have an assessment from one of the physiotherapists at this clinic.

# **BABIES AND BACK PAIN**

### 8 things mums (and dads!) should know

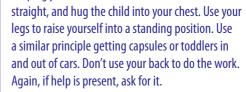
A new baby in the house can be a very joyful experience. However, many new mothers and fathers find that the constant lifting and bending, associated with looking after a new child, can lead to back and neck problems.

Here are some tips to help new mothers and fathers protect their spines:-

- 1. The first few months. Because pregnancy and child birth put a lot of strain on a woman's spine, you need to take special care in the months following the birth.
- 2. Try not to carry your baby excessively. Use a pusher or pram to transport your child. This is especially important as your child gains weight. Babies can become quite heavy fairly rapidly!
- 3. Low surfaces. Don't change nappies or bath your baby on a low surface. Working with your spine in a bent forward position places a lot of strain on your spine. Try and keep your spine straight and upright. Use a high change table and place the baby bath on a bench or table, so you don't have to bend.
- 4. Lifting baby baths filled with water can be guite a strain. Use a bucket to add or remove water, so you don't have to lift it when filling or draining it. Sometimes bathing your baby in the kitchen sink can be less stressful on your spine than trying to deal with a heavy and awkward baby bath. Get help from your partner. Don't do it all on your own.

You might think you should be a "super" woman, but people will understand if you ask for help.

5. Avoid using your back to lift. To pick up a child, drop down on one knee, keeping your back



- 6. If possible, share the load. Try to do more strenuous activity, such as bathing or lifting when your partner, a friend or a family member is available. Have someone help you to do strenuous activities, such as lifting pushers in and out of the car or placing your child in the car capsule.
- 7. Try and get fit. In particular, your physiotherapist can show you exercises to get your tummy muscles toned. This will protect your back.
- 8. Have treatment. If your back is hurting, visit your physiotherapist to have it assessed and treated, so that you can feel better again. Don't battle on. Seek assistance.

If you suffer an injury, a knowledge of appropriate first aid will minimise bleeding and further damage. This in turn will help you overcome your injury as quickly as possible.

**Good first aid** 

will get you

back on track

quicker

The basics of first aid can be summed up by remembering RICER for the first 48 hours. This stands for:-

**REST** the injured part so that no further damage can occur. This may mean stopping work or sport immediately and it may also mean applying some sort of splint to prevent movement of the injured part.

**ICE** should be applied to the injured part for 15-20 minutes, every 30-60 minutes, to slow down bleeding and swelling. Make sure you avoid an ice burn by wrapping the ice in a damp cloth, so that it does not directly contact the skin.



**COMPRESSION** will also help reduce swelling and bleeding. This can be done by wrapping a bandage around the injured part or by compressing the injured

ELEVATE the injured part so that bleeding and swelling flow away from the injured part.

**REFER** the injured person to a health professional for further assessment and management. This would usually mean to your family doctor or your

Physiotherapists are experts in managing sports and soft tissue injuries such as bruises, sprained ligaments and strained muscles.

Carry on this protocol for the first 48 hours after an injury. Also, during this time, avoid **HARM**. This means avoid Heat, Alcohol, Return to activity and Massage until you are sure bleeding and swelling have stopped

### Did you know?

Peanuts are one of the ingredients in dynamite

# A regular "tune-up" can help you stay feeling better

If you have a chronic or recurrent problem, such as back pain, neck pain, headaches or arthritis, a regular "tune-up" may help you enjoy life more.

Most of these problems mentioned respond very well to a course of physiotherapy. In conjunction, your physiotherapist will usually give you self treatment exercises, to help you improve your problem and maintain this improvement. Unfortunately, spinal problems and arthritic pain can recur and can make your life miserable. If this is the case with you, or someone you know, then regular maintenance treatment (or "tune-up" sessions) should be considered.

"Tune-up" sessions will help keep your joints mobile, will release tight muscles and will update



your self treatment exercises, so that they are

giving you maximum benefit.

physiotherapist.

Many patients find that a tune-up session every few weeks can help keep them feeling good and stop them having repeated acute episodes of pain. It is also more cost effective than having extensive treatment to overcome an acute episode of pain. If you feel you would benefit from regular maintenance treatment, please ring to book a time to discuss this with your