

#### Chysica SPINAL & PHYSIOTHERAPY CLINIC

# PHYSIOTHERAPIST

our

### **Practice Newsletter**

#### 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 B. App Sc (Phty) M. Manipulative Phty.

> > **Darren Ross** B. Phty, M. Manipulative Phty.

Andrew Seymour B. Phty, M. Manipulative Phty.

**Solomon Cheng** Bach. Physiotherapy M. Manipulative Phty.

**Chris Tubb** Bach. Physiotherapy

Kerry McLoughlin Bach. Physiotherapy Clinical Pilates Therapist

Carlos Bello Bach. Physiotherapy

Nadia Hall Ba Ex Sci, Grad Dip Ex Rehab Exercise Physiologist

Kate Walters Massage and Myotherapy

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### HOW TO GARDEN WITHOUT HURTING YOUR BACK

As summer progresses, many Australians become more active around the house and garden. Unfortunately,

this can lead to an increase in back problems. If you are a keen gardener, it is important that you take

measures to look after your back. Here are some things to consider:-

#### WARMING UP

Stretch and warm up before gardening. This will prepare your muscles and joints for the work ahead and it will help prevent injury.

#### GET FIT

Having good muscle tone and general fitness is always a good idea. This is especially so if you have back problems. Good flexibility, endurance and muscle tone will help keep your back healthy.

#### BENDING

Prolonged or repeated bending overloads the spine. Try to perform activities between waist and chest level, so that you don't work with a bent spine. An example of

this is placing pots on a bench to do the re-potting, rather than having the pots on the ground, or in a low position.

#### **& LIFTING**

Lifting can also overload the spine. Do not attempt to lift heavy objects on your own. Use a lifting device, like a

trolley, where possible. If you do lift, try to keep your back straight, your bottom pushed out and use your legs to do the work.

Do not jerk; lift slowly and in a controlled manner. Learn to pull your belly button in slightly, while you lift, to help stabilise your spine.

#### **SITTING**

Do not perform any sudden or heavy lifting after you have been sitting for prolonged periods. For example, lifting a bag of mulch out of the boot after a long car trip can put your back at risk. Similarly, prolonged sitting after heavy work can cause

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etc from one point to another. Avoid carrying heavy or awkward objects on your own. Carrying can overload your spine and may cause damage and pain.

#### **\*** A BACK BRACE

the garden; don't sit.

**CARRYING** 

If you have a chronic or recurrent back problem, it may be worth considering wearing a back brace whilst gardening. A back brace will give you support and it will also remind you to maintain good posture.

problems. Lie down to rest or watch TV, after a session in

Try to use a wheel barrow or a trolley to carry pots, bags

#### **VISIT YOUR PHYSIO FOR A CHECK UP**

Visiting your physiotherapist for a check up will help

determine whether you have adequate flexibility and muscle control. Improving this will help keep your spine healthy. Physiotherapists are



experts in dealing with back pain. If you do have trouble, see your physiotherapist without delay.

### Did You Know?

According the German researchers, the risk of heart attack is higher on Monday than any other day of the week.

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## DO YOU NEED ORTHOTICS?

If you have biomechanical problems with your feet, orthotics (shoe inserts) can help realign your feet to take the pressure off your joints and soft tissues. Ask the physiotherapists at this clinic to assess you. We can help arrange either off the shelf or custom made orthotics.



# SPLINTS, TAPE & OTHER PRODUCTS



Your physiotherapist can obtain a range of splints, braces, walking aids, tape and other equipment for you, to help you manage or overcome a problem or disability. A physiotherapist can advise what is the best option for you and ensure it fits properly and suits your condition. If you are considering obtaining a brace or some other type of medical device, ask your physiotherapist to recommend and supply it.

### WHY SITTING AT WORK may be causing you A PAIN in the NECK Find out what you can do about it!

Sitting in office chairs for prolonged periods of time can cause low back pain, or worsen an

existing back or neck problem. This is especially so if you have poor siting posture.



Here is a quick checklist to help make sure that your office chair is as comfortable as possible, and will cause the least amount of stress to your spine. By taking note of the following, you can adjust the office chair according to your physical proportions.

#### **ELBOW MEASURE.**

First, begin by sitting comfortably as close as possible to your desk, so that your upper arms are parallel to your spine. Rest your hands on your work surface (e.g. desktop, computer keyboard). If your elbows are not at a 90-degree angle, move your chair either up or down.

#### THIGH MEASURE.

Check that you can easily slide your fingers under your thigh at the leading edge of the chair. If it is too tight, you need to prop your feet up with an adjustable footrest. If you are

unusually tall, and there is more than a finger width between your thigh and the chair, you need to raise the desk/work surface so that you can raise your chair.

#### **CALF MEASURE.**

With your bottom against the chair back, try to pass your clenched fist between the back of your calf and the

# 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 you 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 
Fracture rehabilitation
Rehabilitation after joint replacements
Rehabilitation 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.

front of your chair. If you can't do that easily, the chair is too deep. You will need to adjust the backrest forward, insert a low back support (such as a lumbar support cushion, a pillow or rolled up towel) or go btain a new office chair.

#### LOW BACK SUPPORT.

Your bottom should be pressed against the back of your chair; and there should be a cushion that causes your lower back to arch slightly, so that you don't slump forward or slouch down in the chair as you tire. This low back support in the office chair is essential to minimize the load (strain) on your back. Never slump or slouch in the chair, as that places extra stress on the structures in the low back, and in particular on the lumbar discs.



#### **RESTING EYE LEVEL.**

Your gaze should be aimed at the centre of your computer screen. If your computer screen is higher or lower than your gaze, you need to either raise or lower it to reduce neck strain.

#### ARMREST.

Adjust the armrest of the office chair so that it just slightly lifts your arms at the shoulders. Use of an armrest on your office chair is important to take some of the strain off your neck and shoulders. It should also make you less likely to slouch forward in your chair.

#### AVOID STATIC POSTURE WHILE SITTING IN OFFICE CHAIRS.

Finally, no matter how comfortable you are in your office chair, prolonged, static posture is not good for your back. Try to remember to stand, stretch and walk for at least a minute or two every half hour. This will help you feel more comfortable, more relaxed and more productive.

### **Did You Know?**

There are 45 miles of nerves in the skin of a human being.

# CRICKET INJURIES WHAT TO DO

Cricket is one of Australia's most popular sports. However, injury can hamper performance and reduce participation. A study by Orchard et al (2006) has shed some light about the types and incidence of injury in Australian cricket. Here are some points to consider:-

#### WHAT ARE THE COMMON INJURIES?

The most common injuries in Australian cricket are:side and abdominal strains, hand and wrist injuries, low back problems, groin and hip problems, thigh and hamstring strains, knee injury, shin/foot/ankle injury and shoulder problems. Thigh strains, ankle/foot/ shin injury and low back problems seem to have the highest incidence.

#### **WHO GETS INJURED?**

Pace bowlers are by far the most injured cricketers. Age plays a factor in overall injury. Batsmen, spinners and wicket keepers over 31 years are very prone to injury. Interestingly, all pace bowlers are susceptible to injury but particularly those aged under 22 years. Perhaps this is a reflection on pace bowling being a predominantly young person's endeavour.

#### COACHING

Like all sports, good coaching may be a factor in reducing injury and enhancing performance. Good technique and practice should, in theory, lead to less strain on cricketer's bodies. The so-called "mixed" bowling action may be associated with low back problems in fast bowlers. "Side on" and "front on" actions are thought to involve less strain on a bowlers' lumbar spine and so less injury.

Workload (number and intensity of bowling sessions per week) may play a factor. Governing this during training and games may also be important in reducing injury to fast bowlers in particular.

#### **FITNESS AND CONDITIONING**

The public's common perception of amateur cricket being dominated by overweight/ unfit individuals may be unfair. However, fitness and conditioning may need

to become a bigger part of the culture in lower grades of cricket. Paying attention to flexibility, core muscle control



#### WARM UPS

Proper warm ups and preparation in all grades is important and should assist in injury prevention.

#### TREATMENT

Despite all of this, injury may still occur. Injured cricketers should make a beeline to their physiotherapist for proper treatment and rehabilitation.

Orchard et al (2006) Sport Health Vol 24 (4) :18-26

## 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.



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 are wondering whether you might benefit from regular maintenance treatment, please ring to book a time to discuss this with your physiotherapist.

### GOOD FIRST AID WILL GET YOU BACK ON TRACK SOONER

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.

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. 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.

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NOW WOULD BE A GOOD TIME FOR SOME ICE

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 site with your hand.

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 physiotherapist.

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? The left lung is smaller than the right lung to make room for the heart

### *Your* PHYSIOTHERAPIST

### Summer 08/09

Physic

**Practice Newsletter** 

25 Wantirna Road RINGWOOD VIC 3134 **PH (03) 9870 8193** www.physica.com.au

#### <u>HOURS</u>

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

©The information in this newsletter is subject to copyright and may not be peproduced in any form or used without prior approval from Leading Edge Health Care 4A Byron St Glenelg 5045 Q. How soon after a whiplash injury should I commence physio?

A. If you suffer a whiplash type injury you are advised to commence exercises to regain movement as soon as possible. A recent study looked at the effect of early movement on people who had a whiplash



injury. The study compared these patients with those who underwent a program of initial rest, wearing a collar and gradual self mobilisation. Patients who carried out early neck exercises had better outcomes in terms of pain relief, reduced sick leave, regaining or retaining neck movement. If you have a whiplash injury, your physiotherapist can help prescribe a neck exercise program suited to your needs. Rosenfeld et al Spine. 2003 Nov 15;28(22):2491-8

Q. Why do I keeping having hamstring injuries?

A. Hamstring injuries are common in sports that require bursts of speed or rapid acceleration, such as soccer, track and field, football, and rugby. Improper warm-up.



fatigue, previous injury, strength imbalance, and poor flexibility have been correlated with injury. What appears clear from the literature is the tendency for hamstring injuries to recur. Minor injuries doubled the risk of having a more severe injury within 2 months. If you suffer from a hamstring injury, you should seek advice from your physiotherapist as soon as possible. If you have had a previous hamstring injury, be aware of it and consult your physiotherapist if you notice any tightness or soreness.

Q. I get pain at the front of my knee when I go for a run. Also, the knee hurts going up stairs, sitting for long periods or squatting. I can't remember injuring the knee. Can physiotherapy help?

A. Many cases of pain at the front of

# Are you due to have orthopaedic 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 commence this (usually as soon as possible). You can also request that you have your physiotherapy carried out at this clinic. the knee are related to knee cap (patella) mal-tracking. This develops when tissue on the outside of the knee cap tightens and counter-balancing muscles on the inside of the knee are weakened. Because the knee cap mal-tracks, this places excessive pressure on the under-surface of the knee cap and this can lead to pain. Other contributing factors can include:- poor foot mechanics, tight thigh muscles, poor pelvic control and poor training technique. Treatment to correct these factors can usually help. Therapy usually involves tape to re-align the knee cap and exercises to stretch and strengthen weak or tight structures.

#### Have I slipped a disc?

You can't really slip a disc. Discs in the spine are strong fibrous structures that join vertebrae to each other. When people say they have slipped a disc, they mean they have



damaged some of the tissue that makes up the disc. Sometimes the gelatinous inner material of the disc will ooze through into the spinal canal, and press on other structures in the area, such as nerves.

A damaged, swollen disc can also press on nerves and other structures.

#### Q. I suffer from headaches. They are pretty constant but they increase when I use a computer or do any desk work. Can physiotherapy help?

A. Headaches can arise from problems in the joints of the upper neck or the surrounding tissue. If your doctor has ruled out a more serious problem, you should try a course



of physiotherapy to see if your neck is responsible. Treatment aimed at mobilising the joints and tissue in the neck combined with specific strengthening exercises can be very beneficial. Correcting your posture, especially when you are sitting at your desk, can also be of value.

#### **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.