



### 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 (Phy)  
M. Manipulative Phy.

#### **Darren Ross**

B. Phy,  
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#### **Andrew Seymour**

B. Phy,  
M. Manipulative Phy.

#### **Solomon Cheng**

Bach. Physiotherapy  
M. Manipulative Phy.

#### **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

## 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

problems. Lie down to rest or watch TV, after a session in the garden; don't sit.

#### ❖ **CARRYING**

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

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.

#### ❖ **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?

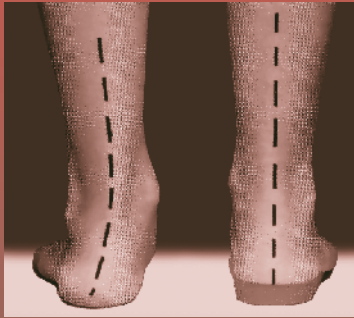
According to the German researchers, the risk of heart attack is higher on Monday than any other day of the week.

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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 sitting 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.

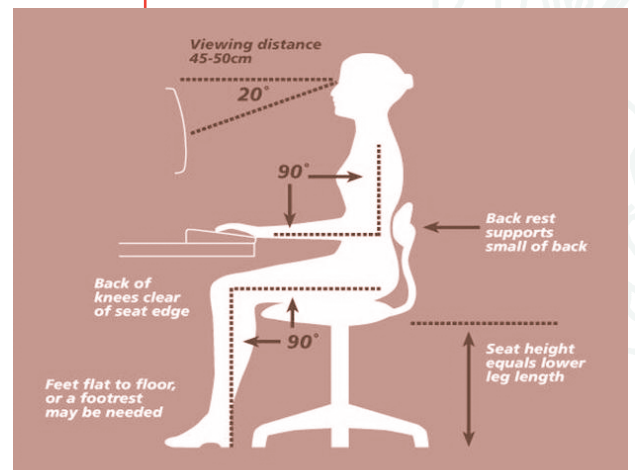
### CALF MEASURE.

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

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 obtain 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.

## 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.

### 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 bowler's 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 and general strength and conditioning should lead to better injury prevention outcomes in cricket.



### 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

## 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.

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.

## 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.

### Did You Know?

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

