

Healthy Back Tips

Do's & Don'ts When Your Back is Hurting

In addition to exercise and using good body mechanics, there are other simple things you can do every day to avoid stress and strain on your back and neck.

Sitting:

Avoid sitting. If you must sit, get up and move around every twenty minutes.

Use a back support and get your knees level or a little higher than your hips. A towel roll or a magazine roll will suffice as an inexpensive back support.

Avoid leaning forward from the waist.

When driving, move the seat forward so that your knees are level with your hips. Don't get so close to the steering wheel that you cannot turn it easily.

Bending:

Avoid bending from the waist when your back hurts. This increases the disc pressure.

Recreational Do's & Don'ts

Remember: Anytime you suddenly increase your activity, you are going to get sore. Keep exercising. You will work the soreness out as you increase your strength and flexibility. Use ICE if the soreness is too great!

Fast Walking:

Great Exercise! Start with a short distance and gradually increase the distance every week. Make your goal 2 miles in 30 minutes. It may take 6-8 weeks to work up to that goal.

Cycling (Outdoor or Stationary):

Adjust the seat so you do not have to stretch your leg to reach the pedal. Raise the handle bars so you do not have to bend over so far. But, remember, your arms are supporting your trunk.

Tennis, Racquetball:

Before you begin these sports, it is recommended that you see your doctor first.

Play with someone who will let you take it easy at first. Lob the ball for the first 3-4 weeks while you are getting into condition.

Keep your knees bent when you serve.

Stay on your toes... keep your body weight on the balls of your feet. This will lead to pivoting. Always pivot, never twist.

Warm up and cool down with stretching exercises.

Remember: Competition adds stress to your muscles. Stay loose, stretch slowly to warm up.

Tired muscles are more susceptible to injuries. Rest by walking around or if you can lie down and put your feet up. **TRY NOT TO SIT** after a vigorous activity.

Bowling:

Bend your knees; do not twist. Add support with a hand on your knee.

Remember: If you are right handed, the right side does all the twisting, EQUALIZE the stress by warming up with the other hand holding the ball. You do not have to release the ball, just swing it on the other side of your body to even out the stress.

Baseball, Softball:

Warm up and cool down with stretching exercises.

Pivot on the balls of your feet when batting.

Wear knee pads to catch grounders. You will be more likely to squat.

