

back care

A strong back is the first place to start for good health.

Did you know that simple things like awkwardly getting out of a chair at the office or incorrectly lifting a box in the storeroom can put unnecessary strain on your back?

Back injuries are seldom caused by a single painful accident. They usually result from a gradual accumulation of poor posture, faulty biomechanics, stress, loss of flexibility and/or a lack of physical conditioning.

Most back discomfort can easily be prevented by performing a couple of stretches and simple exercises each day. However, if you have any pain during these exercises, we strongly recommend you seek professional advice.

so, what causes back pain?

Weak deep abdominal muscles and tight back muscles can create load on the lower spine. This may cause strain and pain in the lower back.

Repetitive forward bending, which you do to lift objects (especially with poor technique), is one of the most common causes of lower back pain. Lower back disc injury can occur gradually as a result of hundreds of forward bends and lifts.

People who lack flexibility and are in poor physical condition are more vulnerable to back injuries than active people. Regular exercise will decrease the likelihood of an injury. Walking, aerobics, running, swimming, cycling, water exercises and strength training are all beneficial if approached with good technique and some common sense.

exercise - bending your back back!

If you have a stiff lower back because you run, stand or sit for prolonged periods of time or do a lot of forward bending and lifting, you will benefit from these exercises, which will also increase back mobility. As we spend so much time bending forward, it is important to do some movements in the opposite direction.

To improve back mobility - press-ups. Start the press-up exercise by lying on your stomach. Press up with your arms until your chest is off the floor. Keep your hips on the floor and relax your back and abdominal muscles. Your neck should also remain relaxed.

To improve back strength and stability - back extension. Perform by lying on your stomach with your arms above your head. Slowly lift one arm and the opposite leg. Keep your pelvis pressed into the floor; don't rotate your torso. Repeat the exercise lifting the other arm and leg.

If you have back pain or would like professional advice in relation to prevention, rehabilitation or Pilates, please contact Robyn Luke, *B App Sc (Phy), Grad Dip App Sc (Sport Phy)*, conveniently located at Active Health Club.

further information:

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