

SHAW CHIROPRACTIC

New Patients Welcome!

SPRING IS FINALLY HERE! HERE ARE SOME TIPS & PREVENTATIVE TECHNIQUES FOR GETTING BACK INTO GARDENING AND ENJOYING IT:

- Make sure your body is properly conditioned when doing outside work. Warmed up muscles will be less likely to tighten up or snap when under strain. You can warm up by taking a brisk walk or doing simple stretching exercises.
- Always carry objects close to your body, near your center of gravity. This minimizes the strain to your lower back and neck.
- Change positions if you're involved in doing a task such as kneeling or sitting. This will improve your circulation and mobility.
- Don't overdo it. Alternate between several tasks to keep yourself alert, and take regular rest breaks.
- Bend and straighten at the knees instead of your back and hips. Avoid picking up heavy loads, and be sure to let your arms, legs and thighs do the lifting, not your back.
- The longer the handle on your garden tools, the greater leverage you have and the less force and twisting motions you need to perform routine tasks. Imagine having to rake leaves with a six-inch handle. The longer the handle, the less work and strain. This is especially true for chores involving raking, digging, pushing, and mowing.
- When doing ground-level chores, such as weeding or planting, do not repeatedly bend over. Rather, get close to the ground by either kneeling or sitting (foam pads or small benches are made especially for these kinds of chores).
- When doing prolonged tasks, such as raking, hoeing, or digging, frequently switch hands. This helps to maximize the amount of energy reserves you use in muscles on both sides of your body. When you stand up after crouching or kneeling for a long period of time, do so slowly and gently to avoid muscle pulls or even joint dislocations. Straighten your legs at the knees, and do not lift your torso at the waist.

Mowing

- Stand as straight as possible, and keep your head up as you rake or mow.
- Try to mow during the early morning and early evening hours, when the sun is not so hot.
- Drink plenty of fluids to keep your muscles hydrated. Protect yourself by wearing a hat, shoes, earplugs, and protective glasses.
- Use as much as your body weight as possible to move your mower (unless it is self-propelled). This will minimize excessive strain to your arms and back.
- When picking up piles of grass, bend at your knees, not at your waist.

Raking

- If you rake leaves, use a "scissors" stance. Keep your right foot forward and left foot back for a few minutes. Occasionally switch by putting your left foot forward and right foot back.
- Always bend at your knees, not the waist, as you pick up leaves. Make piles small to minimize the possibility of straining your back.
- Remember, the longer the handle on your rake, the greater leverage you have and the less force and twisting motions you need to perform routine tasks. A longer rake handle leads to less work and strain.

*If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at (250) 287-7429 or email: dr.shaw@telus.net
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