

WELLNESS LETTER

SPRING IS IN THE AIR

April 2006

GARDENING 101

Gardening for some people can be a chore that has to get done and for others it can be a hobby. Whatever the case may be it is important that your joints and muscles are ready prior to starting gardening this spring.

The reason people get backaches when gardening is that the actions required are quite different from those carried out in the rest of the year.

The main cause of back pain when gardening is prolonged stretching and overuse of the ligaments and joints in the spine. Digging, stooping and bending over can place stress on the ligaments and joints in the lower lumbar spine and cause them to become inflamed and tender.

Gardening can be fun, but it is the heavy lifting that is not so easy. The following safety tips can help you move gardening supplies and loads with ease:

- Stand close to the load to be lifted
- Place your feet shoulder-width apart
- Keep you back straight
- Squat down to the object's level and test the weight of the load
- Use the strength of you leg and arm muscles to smoothly and slowly lift the load
- Keep the load close to your body
- Pivot to turn and face the intended direction of travel
- Avoid twisting your body while carrying the load
- Bend your knees and slowly lower the load to its intended place

DID YOU KNOW... Studies have shown yoga to be particularly helpful for musculoskeletal ailments: A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 1998 showed

that yoga reduced pain and increased grip strength in people with carpal tunnel syndrome. Another study, published in the *Journal of Rheumatology* in 1994, showed that yoga reduced pain and increased range of motion in people with osteoarthritis of the hands.



DREADED ALLERGIES

Don't let allergies keep you from getting outside and enjoying the great outdoors

Although chiropractic is not a treatment for allergies, it does, by permitting the nervous system to function with less stress, permit the immune system to function more effectively.

Allergies are simply a hypersensitive immune system responding to normal antigens in the environment. The nervous system seems to control factors for the immune system. Chiropractic frees up the nerves so that they are not irritated and hypersensitive to stimuli, according to some chiropractors.

Allergy proofing your home

- Keep humidity below 50% if possible
- Keep carpeting to a minimum. Use carpet with low pile
- Keep windows and doors closed during pollen season
- Keep surfaces clean and free from dust
- Make sure dryer is vented
- Keep amount of upholstered furniture to a minimum
- Install an air cleaner in the house
- Use an air conditioning system with a filter
- Use shades instead of blinds
- Limit clutter and knick-knacks that collect dust
- Exhaust fans should be used when cooking to remove humidity
- Do not allow smoking in the house

References:

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