

Dr. Colin Gage * Dr. Duane Drobot

Nicola Valley Chiropractic
1949 Quilchena Ave.
P.O. Box 909
Merritt, BC
V1K 1B8

Ph: (250) 378-5456
Fax:(250) 378-8259
Email: info@merrittchiro.com
Website: www.merrittchiro.com

"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

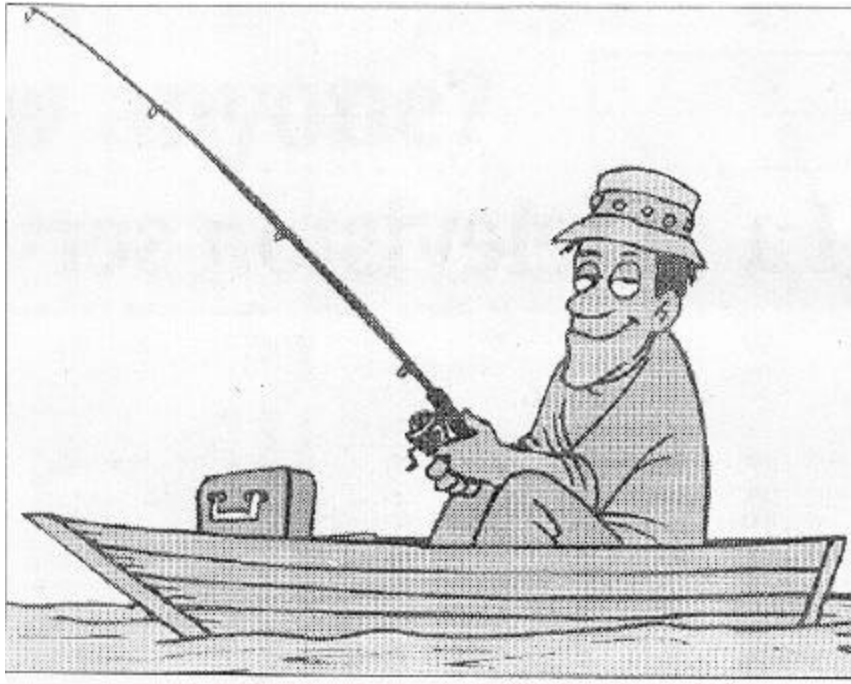
Fishing With Good Posture?

It is unlikely that you ever think of your back while fishing. However, the fish are plentiful in many of our lakes and many of us are taking advantage of this. This means long periods of sitting in boats or float tubes without moving. I have had numerous patients in my office over the last two weeks who have aggravated their lower back by spending hours sitting slouched forwards while fishing.

Your back is a very dynamic structure. It is most healthy and flexible when it experiences regular and controlled movement. This is why regular exercise decreases the risk of experiencing acute low back pain. When someone spends prolonged periods of time sitting, regardless if it is in a boat or the desk at work, their back muscles become tight and stiff. This makes you prone to straining muscles or spraining joints when you finally do get up to move. The most common scenario I see is when the person has been fishing all day and they finally decide to call it quits. When reaching the shore, the person's low back experiences a sharp pain when they lift the gas motor or battery for and electric motor. It is not just the weight of the item they are lifting, it is the forward bending posture that the back is inevitably in when you reach to the back of the boat. Combining a stiff back with an improper lifting technique is definitely a recipe for pain and suffering.

This type of injury is quite preventable. The easiest way is to exercise your back regularly so that you do not become stiff in the first place. You could also keep your back straight when reaching for the fishing gear or motor. When bending over, keep the concave arch in your lower back. When you lose this and your back flattens out or becomes convex, you put yourself at risk. Posture while fishing is also very important. Maintaining a slouched posture while sitting for hours will make the back muscles fatigued and sore. Sit up straight with your shoulders back to help maintain the curve in the low back.

When sitting in a boat, there are also some simple stretches you can do. While sitting on the seat in the boat, reach across the left side of your body with your right hand. Grab the edge of the boat on your left and slowly twist your back so your chest is facing the left side of the boat. Keep breathing and hold this



stretch for fifteen seconds. Then, reach across the right side of your body with your left hand. Grab the edge of the boat on your right and slowly twist your back so your chest is facing the right edge of the boat. Again, keep breathing and hold the stretch for fifteen seconds. Repeat this three times on each side per hour in the boat.

(Editor's note: When you have to go to the bathroom while fishing, make sure you are wearing your life jacket. After all, 70% of men who drowned while fishing were later found with their fly down.)