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

Coping With Low Back Pain

If you are unfortunate enough to experience an acute bout of low back pain, you should see your chiropractor immediately. The sooner a diagnosis is made and treatment commences, the faster you will recover. Once treatment has begun, there will inevitably be a period of time that your body will require to heal itself. There is no magical drug that can do this for you. While the symptoms should gradually lessen over a period of days, you should be careful not to further aggravate your condition. To avoid this, keep the following items in mind:

Lifting Objects

- Try to avoid lifting objects if at all possible.
- If you must lift objects, do not try to lift objects that are awkward or are heavier than 30 pounds.
- Before you lift a heavy object, make sure you have firm footing.
- To pick up an object that is lower than the level of your waist, keep your back straight and bend at your knees and hips. Do not bend forward at the waist with your knees straight.
- Stand with a wide stance close to the object you are trying to pick up and keep your feet firm on the ground. Tighten your stomach muscles and lift the object using your leg muscles. Straighten your knees in a steady motion. Don't jerk the object up to your body.
- Stand completely upright without twisting. Always move your feet forward when lifting an object.
- If you are lifting an object from a table, slide it to the edge of the table so that you can hold it close to your body. Bend your knees so that you are close to the object. Use your legs to lift the object and come to a standing position.
- Avoid lifting heavy objects above waist level.
- Hold packages close to your body with your arms bent. Keep your stomach muscles tight. Take small steps and go slowly.
- To lower the object, place your feet as you did to lift, tighten stomach muscles and bend your hips and knees.

Reaching Overhead

- Use a footstool or chair to bring yourself up to the level of what you are reaching.
- Get your body as close as possible to the object you need.

- Make sure you have a good idea of how heavy the object is you are going to lift.
- Use two hands to lift.

Sleeping and Lying Down

- Select a firm mattress and box spring set that does not sag. If necessary, place a board under your mattress. You can also place the mattress on the floor temporarily if necessary.
- If you've always slept on a soft surface, it may be more painful to change to a hard surface. Try to do what's most comfortable for you.
- Use a back support (lumbar support) at night to make you more comfortable. A rolled sheet or towel tied around your waist may be helpful.
- Try to sleep in a position that helps you maintain the curve in your back (such as on your back with a lumbar roll or on your side with your knees slightly bent). Do not sleep on your side with your knees drawn up to your chest.
- When standing up from the lying position, turn on your side, draw up both knees and swing your legs on the side of the bed. Sit up by pushing yourself up with your hands. Avoid bending forward at your waist.

Other Helpful Tips

- Avoid activities that require bending forward at the waist or stooping.
- When coughing or sneezing, try to stand up, bend slightly backwards to increase the curve in your spine when you cough or sneeze.