

FACT SHEET

DIY INJURIES



WHAT IS CHIROPRACTIC?

Chiropractic is the third largest primary health care profession in the world after medicine and dentistry and offers an alternative to medication and surgery for many conditions.

WHO REGULATES THE PROFESSION?

In the UK, Chiropractic is a fast-growing, independent profession regulated by the General Chiropractic Council.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Chiropractic places its emphasis on the diagnosis and management of problems affecting the nerves, muscles or joints of the body.

WHAT CAN CHIROPRACTORS DO?

Most people associate Chiropractic with the treatment of back pain, neck pain and headaches but Chiropractors treat many other conditions as well, in fact, most ailments involving any bone, joint or muscle, including feet, knees, hips, arms, shoulders and hands. Chiropractors use a holistic approach that takes into consideration your overall health and lifestyle.

Although best known for manipulating joints (also known as 'adjusting'), Chiropractors can utilise a number of different procedures in the course of patient care such as heat, cold, electrical stimulation, ultrasound, traction, postural support, exercise and dietary management.

HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?

For more information on Chiropractic, or to find out if Chiropractic can help you or a friend / colleague, please contact us.

DOING DIY SAFELY

If you are like most "DIYers", the tasks you are taking on are likely to be far removed from your normal every day activities.

Failing to remember this simple fact is the main reason why so many DIY enthusiasts suffer aches and pains, particularly in their back. This leaflet will help you prevent injury and guide you on how you can be alert to the signs of injury.

Dynamic Chiropractic
Cheltenham House
Cheltenham Drive
Sale
Cheshire
M33 2DQ

0161 905 3440

www.dynamicchiropractic.co.uk



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BACK PAIN & DIY

Most back pain is due to the prolonged stretching of tendons and ligaments in the back. If this strain continues it can lead to a gradual loss of support for your spine and joint wear and tear. Pressure can also increase on the spinal nerves and cause pain elsewhere.

The result is often mild injury, such as an ache in the lower back.

IGNORING ACHES

Many people believe that aches are temporary and ignore them thinking that they will go away. Never work through the ache, it is a sign that something is wrong. If you continue to aggravate the injury then further damage can occur to the soft tissue structures that may lead to sharper pains. The body's response to this is to lock the affected area by causing the muscles in that region to go into a spasm. This is to try to prevent further injury.

At this point people usually consult a Chiropractor saying, "My back just locked up this morning when I got up". Usually the initial discussion will reveal that they have been doing something unusual the previous day. Whilst Chiropractors are always available to help ease those DIY pains, they much prefer that their patients try to prevent injury as much as possible.



SIMPLE GUIDELINES

So that you can enjoy the fruits of your labour, here are some simple guidelines to help ensure that improving your home does not become a pain in the back:

Lifting & Carrying

Always lift heavy weights extremely carefully. Approach them slowly, getting a firm grip, bend your knees and keep your back straight, taking the weight with your legs and not with your lower back. Always keep the load close to your body and try not to pivot on your legs but turn your whole body. If you have to move heavy loads, either get help or use a wheelbarrow. Most DIY centres now sell two wheel trolleys, which are a good investment.

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Kneeling

It is always better to kneel on one leg rather than bending down repeatedly from the hips. If you suffer from knee problems or osteoarthritis use a cushion to kneel on. If you must bend, keep the lower back as hollow as possible.

Workbench Levels

Your workbench should be a level that will allow you to work without bending forward from the hips. It is wise not to stand in front of your workbench for long periods at a time without a break.

Varying The Task

Working constantly at one task means your movements are repetitive.

This is the prime cause of strains and sprains. If possible, carry out short periods of activity on a variety of jobs rather than slogging away at the same one all day.

Keep Warm

Chilled muscles are more easily strained. So keep yourself warm and covered. Wear several layers and take them off as you warm up.

Rest Periods

However anxious you are to get the job done, it is sensible to take regular rest periods. A sit down with a cup of tea can make you feel better in the days to come too. Not taking a regular break is as bad for your back as continually working in the same position.

The Morning After

If the next day you find that you ache you must rest and recuperate. Should the pain persist, consult your Chiropractor and they will advise whether you should apply heat or ice packs to the area, or whether you require treatment.

Remember

Be sensible. Take simple precautions and do not work beyond your capacity. If you exercise and keep fit, you will be in much better shape for tackling all those DIY jobs.

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