

STEWART CHIROPRACTIC NEWS

Taking charge of your health!

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NATURAL WAYS TO BEAT BACK PAIN

It strikes without warning: a dull ache or a shooting pain that can last a few days or persist for months. Maybe you lifted something heavy. Maybe you sat at your desk too long. Or maybe it seems to occur for no reason at all. The chances are that eventually you will get back pain. 9 out of 10 adults experience back pain at some point in their life. Back pain can be caused by muscle strains and spasms, as well as by more serious conditions such as joint locking, or degenerative conditions such as spinal degeneration, and skeletal irregularities. Obesity, smoking, stress, poor posture, and fibromyalgia can all cause or contribute to back pain. The bad news is that treatments historically have proven to be ineffective and even detrimental. Surgery for back pain, for example, is the third most frequent surgical procedure in the country. However, the studies and even the president of the orthopedic surgeon association state that the only time back surgery is appropriate is when there is paralysis or bladder incontinence. In fact, spinal surgery has an 85% failure rate. And although doctors once assigned back pain sufferers to bed rest, studies now demonstrate that bed rest worsens and even prolongs recovery. (*New England Journal of Medicine*, 1995, vol. 332, no 6) The good news is that a host of natural treatments have been shown to speed your recovery or prevent it in the first place. Here are 4 natural ways to keep your back happy and healthy.



1. CLEAN UP YOUR LIFESTYLE

Back pain is often avoidable, even when it seems to sneak up on you. An overall healthy lifestyle is a major defense. This is why chiropractors recommend that we maintain a healthful diet and include regular exercise and stretching.

Changing your lifestyle is one of the hardest things for people to do. However, it is

essential to a healthy back and health in general. Maintaining a regular schedule of low-impact exercises and stretching such as walking, swimming, bike riding, yoga and Pilates, for example, is a great way to side-step back pain.

Improvements in your home and work place environments can help your back too, such as reorganizing your work setup to reduce repetitive movements or setting up your workstation so that you are not standing or sitting in an awkward position. If you sit for long periods, take a break every 30 minutes to stand up, walk around, and stretch.

2. LEARN SELF TREATMENT



Sometimes simple self-treatments can make a world of difference. Since most back pain episodes are accompanied by inflammation, it is important to apply ice periodically to alleviate pain and reduce the inflammation, which if left untreated will produce scar tissue. After a few days and after most of the pain is gone, hot packs can be applied, which helps to relax the muscles.

3. CONSIDER CHIROPRACTIC CARE



Chiropractic care involves small amounts of force to adjust spinal joints and restore back mobility. Once seen as unconventional, today this spinal manipulation is one of the most accepted and proven treatments for back pain. How does chiropractic work? Sometimes we compare the back to a mobile hanging from the ceiling. It is movable but stationary, with each spinal joint balancing out the rest. If one joint becomes immobile, the balance will shift, leading to stress and stretching, even tearing, in some cases muscles, ligaments, and tendons causing back pain. By restoring healthy movement to back joints, chiropractors allow the rest of a person's

musculoskeletal system to return to its normal position. Depending on the severity of the case, spinal readjustment may take a couple to several visits.

4. TRY MASSAGE THERAPY



Another popular, noninvasive back-pain treatment is massage therapy, which helps to relieve stress and strain from muscles and connective tissues using pressure, kneading, lifting strokes, and other techniques. In essence, massage therapy helps to melt the tissues that may be stuck or tight. One of the main benefits is that massage increases the blood circulation to the area, helping to bring nutrients to the region, as well as taking away waste products.

Although back pain plagues us in this country, costing billions of dollars per year in treatment and lost productivity, with a few simple changes and with proper treatment, we can reduce our pain and suffering to our back and to our wallet.



DR. KEVIN L. STEWART takes pride in the 10 years he has offered skilled chiropractic care to his clients. His commitment to his

patients and their health keeps him abreast of the latest technologies as well as advances in patient care. In accordance with his commitment to patient comfort, satisfaction and convenience, **Stewart Chiropractic is open 5 days a week and provides emergency care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In treatment programs, prescribed gentle adjustments, advanced techniques, modern diagnostic, and therapeutic equipment are combined to attain optimum patient care.**