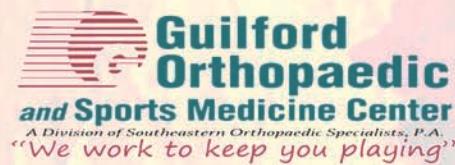


October 2012 Newsletter



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As we move from summer to fall leaves aren't the only thing you will see changing. Along with the leaves, the weather is changing and becoming cooler as well. With flu season lurking just around the corner, Guilford Orthopaedic would like give you a friendly reminder to get your flu shot before the flu gets you. We would also like to wish you a safe and fun Halloween whether you are doing the tricking or the treating.

Dr. Paul shares his advice on the 5 most important facts of a healthy back in the American adult population.



All of us are seeking prevention and remedies for painful low back syndrome, which is one of the most common orthopaedic complaints we face today. Unfortunately, based on human evolution, the link between the lower lumbar spine and the fixed pelvis is a point of maximum stress, and the problem is 5 mobile lumbar vertebrae, 5 intervertebral disks, and appropriate supportive structures of ligaments and muscles which take daily assault through activities and upright posture. Some professions are worse than others on the low back, but a multitude of factors can make it degenerate and go awry much more easily. Of course, there are genetic factors involved, but that is one thing that each of us cannot control.

I have identified 5 major areas which I think are of key concern with respect to a healthy adult back:

1. Try as best you can to keep body weight per height to reasonable, normal standards. Excessive body weight only adds to the pressure on the lower lumbar disks and supporting structures, and it seems fairly intuitive that excessive weight easily breaks down those structures.
2. No smoking. This is a little-known fact, but it also seems relatively intuitive that nicotine, carbon monoxide, and the aromatic chemicals within a tobacco leaf are all detrimental to tissue repair after micro-injury. Disks degenerate and turn to near syrup with heavy smoking, and the bone becomes less dense, and the surrounding structures as well as the ligaments become very, very brittle and unhealthy. It is probably the most important negative in overall back care and the most detrimental to a healthy low back.
3. It is very important as we age to work on anterior abdominal tone as much as possible. This, coupled with paraspinal muscle strengthening, simple sit-ups, is a good way to start. Very lax abdominal musculature defeats the purpose of cylindrical pressure on the spine, and this often causes an unhealthy sagging or lordosis of the back which further hastens its degeneration and stress on muscles, ligaments, bones, disks, and nerves.
4. When one has the opportunity, one should be very careful about excessive bending, twisting, and lifting with the low back at the same time. Repetitive forces such as this will ultimately fatigue the ring of the disk material and produce disk rupturing and bulging and is one of the reasons that golfers on the pro circuit who over-turn on their swings have a high degree of back injury and disk problems.
5. A little-known fact is one should, as one ages, pay attention to bone-density issues. Soft bones do not support structures well and especially in postmenopausal women and older men can have a deleterious effect on pain in the lumbar facet joints and vertebral endplates. The overall rule, as it is in the other parts of the body, is to think the softer the bone, the more propensity to bone pain because the vertebrae are richly innervated with nerves.

Therefore, if one can keep these 5 rules in mind, one can go a long way toward preventing and lessening the episodes of back strain, degeneration, and herniation that are so ubiquitous in our culture.

The secret is to finding the right balance for your skeletal frame and pay attention to these issues if one wants to avoid the nongenetic causes of pain and discomfort with an aging back.

We at Guilford Orthopaedic have a full range of professionals to analyze and effectively treat both conservatively, surgically, and with therapy most all of these issues, but I must emphasize that you, yourself, need to be part of the process and keep your frame in the best shape possible through these measures so that we can help achieve your best fitness and function.

Guilford Orthopaedics strives to ensure the best experience and availability to ALL our patients!



We are open Saturdays from 9am until 1pm.
Be sure to call 336-275-3325 to schedule your appointment.

If after hours please visit our Urgent Care located at 201 E Wendover Avenue Greensboro, NC 27401 or call 336-235-BONE(2663) they are open M-F 5:30pm until 9pm and Sat. 10am until 2pm.