

**WINTER  
2007**

# Rehabilitation in Motion

PHYSIOTHERAPY MASSAGE CHIROPRACTICS  
ERGONOMICS ORTHOTICS KINESIOLOGY/EXERCISE THERAPY

## Setting the Pace

**A newsletter of helpful information for employers,  
workers and healthcare providers.**

### REDUCING THE INCIDENCE OF LOW BACK PAIN



In a 1998 study, pain days were reduced by 23% for individuals with non-specific back pain simply by avoiding forward bending motions in the early morning. In a 3 year follow-up of these individuals, pain days decreased by a further 10 days per month for a total decrease of 51%. Snook, S.H., Webster, B.S. and McGorry, R.W. (2002) The reduction of chronic, non-specific low back pain

through the control of early morning lumbar flexion: 3 year follow-up. Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation, 12(1)

**Think that you need to increase your back strength and flexibility to reduce your risk of back injuries? Think again!!** While you certainly need enough strength and range of motion to do what's required for your work and away from work activities, having a very flexible spine doesn't have much to do with function at work.



Parks et.al. (2003) On the validity of ratings of impairment for low back disorders. Spine 28(4):380-384

In 1984, Biering-Sorenson showed that muscle strength is not related to who will have back problems in the future. BUT, improving back muscle endurance does have a benefit in reducing risk of back problems!

Biering-Sorenson (1984) Physical measurements as risk indicators for low-back trouble over a one-year period. Spine 9:106-119  
Luoto et.al. (1995) Static back endurance and the risk of low back pain.

### WE'VE BEEN BUSY!

British Columbia Association of Kinesiologists Rehabilitation in Motion continues to be a strong participant in the Association (the governing body for Kinesiologists). The BCAK recently held its Annual General Meeting. Daniel Egali was the keynote speaker and he inspired us all to reach a new level of expertise and excellence in our professional pursuits!

### STAFF TRAINING

Clinic staff have been busy attending several workshops and seminars to keep up with the latest research and clinical practice guidelines. Seminars have included;

- Brain injury treatment
- Forensic Rehabilitation
- Osteofit (exercise programming to reduce the effects of osteoporosis)
- Disability Management
- Best Business Practices
- Corporate Wellness



### HOLIDAY TRIVIA

- ☀ The average American takes six months to pay off holiday credit-card bills.
- ☀ Pogonophobia: the fear of beards.
- ☀ There are currently 78 people named S. Claus living in the U.S. -- and one Kriss Kringle.
- ☀ December is the most popular month for nose jobs.
- ☀ Weight of Santa's sleigh loaded with one Beanie Baby for every kid on earth: 333,333 tons.
- ☀ Number of reindeer required to pull a 333,333-ton sleigh: 214,206 -- plus Rudolph.
- ☀ To deliver his gifts in one night, Santa would have to make 822.6 visits per second, sleighing at 3,000 times the speed of sound. At that speed, Santa and his reindeer would burst into flame instantaneously.

Port Alberni Clinic  
2996 2nd Avenue  
Port Alberni, BC V9Y 1Z2  
Tel: (250) 723-9675  
Fax: (250) 723- 9699

Courtenay/Comox Clinic  
780 Grant Ave  
Courtenay, BC V9N 2T3  
Tel: (250) 334-9670  
Fax:(250) 334 - 9656

Campbell River Clinic  
2315 S. Island Highway  
Campbell River, BC V9W 1C4  
Tel:(250) 923 - 3773  
Fax:(250) 923 - 3644



**WINTER  
2007**

# Rehabilitation in Motion

PHYSIOTHERAPY MASSAGE CHIROPRACTICS  
ERGONOMICS ORTHOTICS KINESIOLOGY/EXERCISE THERAPY

## Setting the Pace

**A newsletter of helpful information for employers,  
workers and healthcare providers.**

## SHOVELING SNOW SUPER FEATURE!

There's little doubt that we'll see a few more dumps of snow this year. There is also little doubt that, for many, shoveling snow will aggravate an already "naggy back" or cause the onset of back pain. Here is some helpful advice for our clients

One of the more common causes of back injuries during the winter months is snow removal. Using the wrong body mechanics when shoveling snow can put undue stress on the spine and lead to muscle strains, falls, or more serious back injuries. The following snow removal tips can help you to avoid low back injuries and pain during the snowy winter season.

### Pick the right snow shovel

An ergonomic snow shovel can help take some of the effort out of your snow removal chores. A shovel with a curved handle or an adjustable handle length will minimize painful bending, requiring you to bend your knees only slightly and arch your back very slightly while keeping the shovel blade on the ground. In addition, a small, lightweight, plastic blade helps reduce the amount of weight that you are moving.

### Warm up thoroughly

Cold, tight muscles are more prone to injury than warmed up, flexible muscles. Do your back a favor by warming up for five to ten minutes before shoveling or any strenuous activity. Get your blood moving with a brisk walk, marching in place, or another full-body activity. Then, stretch your low back and hamstrings (the large muscles in the back of the thigh) with some gentle stretching exercises. Limber up your arms and shoulders with a body hug.

### Pace yourself during snow removal

Removing small amounts of snow frequently is less strenuous than removing a large pile at once. If possible, removing snow over a period of days will lessen the strain on the back and arms. In deep snow, remove a few inches at a time, rather than attempting to shovel the full depth at once. When shoveling, take a break for a minute or two every 10-15 minutes or if you feel overworked at any point. Use this opportunity to stretch your arms, shoulders, and back to keep them warm and flexible.

### Use ergonomic lifting techniques

Whenever possible, push the snow to one side rather than lifting it. When lifting the snow shovel is necessary, make sure to use ergonomic lifting techniques:

- ☺ Always face towards the object you intend to lift
- ☺ Bend at the hips, not the low back, and push the chest out, pointing forward. Then, bend your knees and lift with your leg muscles, keeping your back straight

### SOME OTHER HELPFUL HINTS

- Keep your loads light and do not lift an object that is too heavy for you
- If you must lift a shovel full, grip the shovel with one hand as close to the blade as comfortably possible and the other hand on the handle (handle and arm length will vary the technique)
- Avoid twisting the back to move your object to its new location – always pivot your whole body to face the new direction
- Keep the heaviest part of the object close to your body at your center of gravity
- Walk to the new location to deposit the item rather than reaching or tossing
- When gripping the shovel, keep your hands about 12 inches apart to provide greater stability and minimize the chances of injuring your low back.
- Keep your feet on the ground
- Slippery conditions while shoveling can lead to slipping and/or falls and strains that can injure your back. Shoes or boots with good treads will help to minimize injuries from slipping.

