

Plant and Rake Without the Ache

Gardening is a great way to stay active and have fun in the sun. But many Ontarians sustain injuries that could easily have been prevented with a little know-how.

Stretch Before You Start

To plant and rake without the ache, do each of these stretches five times. Don't bounce, jerk or strain. Stretches should be gentle and should not cause pain.

Overall conditioning:

Take a walk, even on the spot. Ten to 15 minutes should do it. Don't forget to lift your knees and gently swing your arms.



Your sides:

1. Extend one arm over your head.
2. Bend left from the waist.
3. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat to the right.

Your thighs:

1. Lean against a tree.
2. Bend your right knee and grasp your ankle with your left hand.
3. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat with your left knee.



Your hamstrings:

1. Stand.
2. Reach your hands to the sky.
3. Then, bending at the waist, reach toward your toes.
4. Hold for 15 seconds.



Your wrists:

1. Hold one arm out in front of you, palm down.
2. Bend your wrist until the fingers point to the ground.
3. Use your opposite hand to hold this position.
4. Place your hands in "prayer" position, and press palms together.
5. Keep your arm straight and place your palm in the "stop" position.
6. Use your opposite hand to hold this position.

Your shoulders:

1. Let your arms hang loose.
2. Rotate your shoulders forward. Then rotate back.



Your arms and shoulders:

1. Hug yourself snugly.
2. Slowly rotate at the waist as far as is comfortable to the left, then right.

Your back:

1. In a seated position, bend from the hips, keeping your head down.
2. Reach for the ground.



If you experience back pain that lasts more than two or three days, call your chiropractor for an evaluation. To find a chiropractor near you, go to www.chiropractic.on.ca.

Bend Your Knees to Lift With Ease



Get close to the load

Before lifting something heavy, position yourself close to the object. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, head up, with your feet and body pointing in the same direction.

Knees bent, back straight

Check the weight of what you're lifting. Use your leg and arm muscles to smoothly and slowly lift the load.

Make sure you're in sync

Keep the load close to your body. Pivot with your feet — don't twist your body while carrying the load.

Easy does it

Bend your knees and slowly lower the load to its intended place.

Don't forget

Do not lift heavy objects above your waist and avoid heavy lifting immediately after prolonged bending or kneeling.

Many hands make light work

Get some help with the heavy and awkward loads. Stand on something solid and slowly lift the load, keeping it close to your body, and pass the load to your helper.

What is a chiropractor?

Chiropractors are regulated primary health care providers, like medical doctors, dentists and optometrists.

In Canada, chiropractors are required to complete a minimum of three years of university, followed by four intensive years of training at an accredited chiropractic college. Their training enables them to assess, diagnose and treat disorders related to the spine, nervous system and joints.

Chiropractors work to help you stay active and can prescribe therapeutic exercises to help you increase your strength and improve your range of motion.

What is chiropractic?

One of the largest primary-contact health care professions in Ontario, chiropractic is a non-invasive, hands-on health care discipline that focuses on the neuromusculoskeletal system.

For many conditions, such as lower back pain, chiropractic care is frequently the primary method of treatment and, where other conditions exist, chiropractic care may complement or support medical treatment by relieving the neuromusculoskeletal problems associated with the condition.

Visit the Ontario Chiropractic Association's website, www.chiropractic.on.ca for more information or to find a chiropractor near you.

The Right Moves

Alternate

Heavy. Light. Heavy. Light. That's the right way to handle those chores.

Change hands

Take the strain off by changing the position of your hands.

Check your position

And change it often. Kneel, then stand. Or simply sit and relax for a while.



Lift right

Make sure your back is straight, and always bend your knees. Carry the load close to your body, and avoid heavy lifting immediately after bending or kneeling.

Rake right

Ease the strain on your back by putting one leg in front, the other behind. Switch legs and hands from time to time.

Kneel to plant

Use knee pads or a kneeling mat to reduce the strain while you plant and weed. Keep your back straight and take breaks frequently.

200 - 20 Victoria St.
Toronto, ON M5C 2N8
Phone: 416-860-0070
Toll Free: 1-877-327-2273
www.chiropractic.on.ca



Treatment That Stands Up.

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Ontario Chiropractic Association

