

SENIORS LIVING

Don't injure your back — even when knitting

If you enjoy the cozy feeling of knitting during winter, be aware that this hobby requires repetitive motion — and much like typing, sewing, or any other repetitive task, a long season of knitting can lead to a variety of injuries.

The Ontario Chiropractic Association has compiled a few tips and techniques to help knitters enjoy their hobby free of pain and discomfort. First and foremost they say, the single most important thing a knitter can do to prevent injury is take frequent, regular breaks, plus the following:

- Change the position of your body and look up from your work (and into the distance) often.
- Sit with your feet on the floor, in a chair, and try not to hunch. When adjusting your posture, try to engage your abdomen.

- Stretch your fingers by clenching your hands and then spreading your fingers as far as you can. Stretch and strengthen your wrists with simple curls. Lay your forearm on a flat surface with your wrist at the edge. Holding a small hand weight let your wrist fall over the edge and then lift the

weight up towards you only bending your wrist. The rest of your arm should remain laying flat on the table.

- Sit in a comfortable but supportive chair and consider placing a small cushion, rolled up towel, or sweater between your chair and the curve in the small of your low back.

- The tools you use matter — consider smooth, lightweight needles. Circular needles are best for large projects.

- Make small, efficient movements. Practice how small you can make your movements. Keep the working yarn close to the tip of the needles.

- Plan your knitting projects in advance and try to space them out over time.

Any pain or stiffness resulting from knitting should not be ignored. Most of all, knitting is a fun, relaxing hobby, so make sure it contributes to your well-being and health, not to injuries. More information on back health, including how to protect it during snow shoveling, can be found online at yourback-health.com.

—www.newscanada.com



Grandparents Day: Pre-schooler Riley Cooper was thrilled to show her grandmother, Marge Dover, who was visiting from St. Louis, Mo., her play area during the Halton Hills Christian School's annual Grandparents and Special Friends Day recently. The visiting grandparents and special friends were entertained by the students, had lunch and spent time in their classrooms.
Photo by Eamonn Maher

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