

Health Care

Spring into action— with the help of physiotherapy.

After perhaps the coldest winter in recent memory, spring has finally arrived. The physiotherapists at William Osler Health Centre want to share some tips to help you and your body enjoy the warmer weather.

An August 2002 Web site poll by the Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA)/Ipso-Reid poll found 54% of Canadians believe they are less mobile today than 10 years ago. For women aged 18-34 years, 30% say they have difficulty climbing several flights of stairs compared to their male counterparts.

April 19 to May 19 is Physiotherapy Month and this year physiotherapists are promoting walking, gardening or golfing as activities to help get you F.R.E.S.H. by maintaining:

- F-flexibility
- R- range of motion
- E- endurance
- S-strength
- H-healthy living

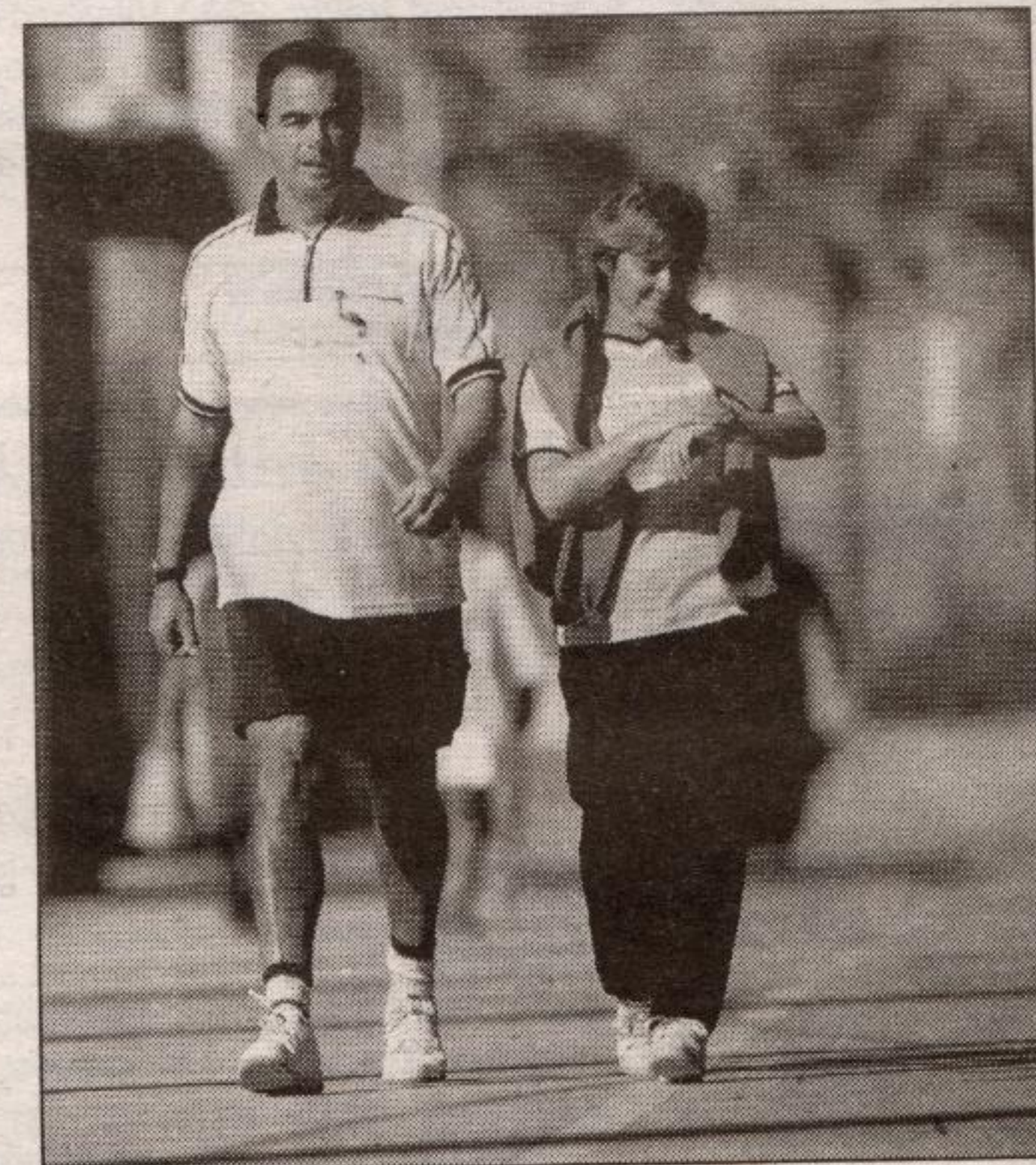
During this month physiotherapists are also promoting to the public their integral role within the hospital and especially the community.

So what is physiotherapy? It is a client-focused health profession with the goal of promoting, restoring and prolonging physical independence by helping clients to maximize their potential.

Physiotherapy has actually played a key role in health care since its beginnings in the early part of the last century. In 1917 the first formal school of physiotherapy was founded and over the years the level of expertise has expanded to involve caring for children, the elderly, patients of stroke or orthopaedic injuries as well as patients suffering with heart and lung disease.



At William Osler Health Centre there are approximately 65 physiotherapists who are part of the multi-disciplinary teams who provide care in areas such as intensive care, acute medical and surgical



care as well as care to outpatients.

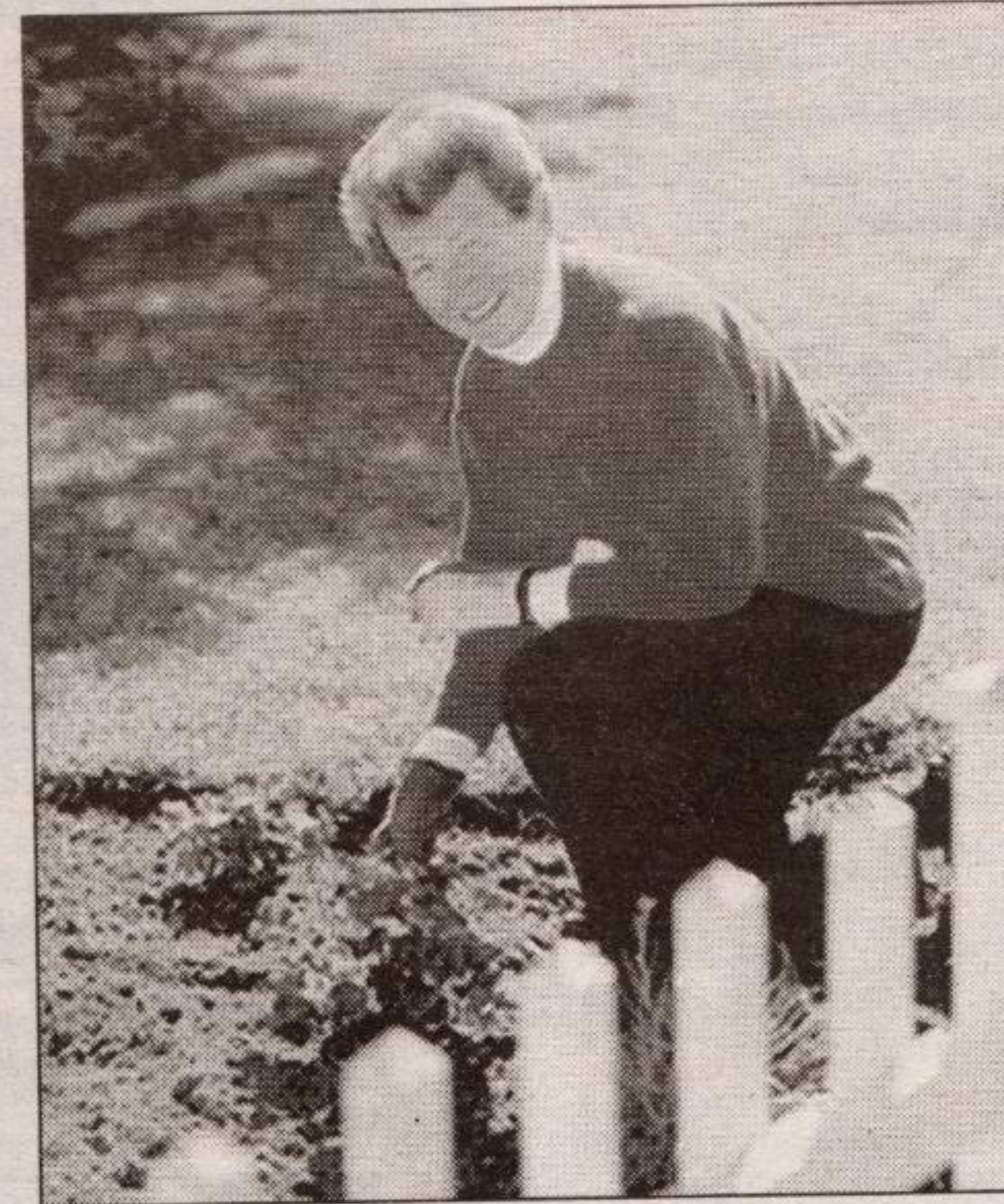
During Physiotherapy Month, the physiotherapy staff at William Osler Health Centre want to get you moving to help prevent injury and allow you to enjoy nature.

One simple activity anyone can do is walking. Walking is an inexpensive exer-

cise that can be enjoyed by all ages. Make walking part of your daily routine by walking to work, or during lunch breaks or by parking at the back of the parking lot and taking a stroll. It's easy to stay motivated if you walk with a friend or spouse.

Fact: A brisk walk can burn 100 calories per mile or the equivalent of one small muffin.

Gardening is another simple activity that not only provides fresh air and relaxation but also is the only outdoor activity where you can enjoy the "fruits" of your



labour. During the winter, when you are making your plans and starting your seedlings, you should also be keeping your body in good condition to handle the tasks of spring. Experienced gardeners and physiotherapists recommend that you choose tools with the correct grip size for your hand or using power tools to avoid

repetitive tasks. You should also work in comfort by using kneepads, padded kneeling stools or sitting stools when out working in your garden oasis. These suggestions will help you to prevent injury by reducing strain on your joints.

Golf is another fun way to get some exercise in the beauty of nature. But leave the cart behind and take a walk on the course to get the most out of your day. Also, remember to lighten your load and make sure to choose a golf bag with two back straps to help distribute the weight and reduce back and neck strain. A pull cart is also a good way to alleviate the strain of carrying heavy clubs along the course. And remember to bend at the knees, not the back, when searching for lost balls or lifting your golf bag.

Whatever activity you choose to do this spring, the physiotherapists at William Osler Health Centre caution you to:

- Ease into any exercise routine
- Dress comfortably and wear proper footwear with good support
- Warm up and stretch before and especially after activities to prevent injury
- Consult with your family physician before starting any exercise program

If you would like more information, be sure to visit our Web site at www.williamoslerhc.on.ca.

The views expressed in this month's column are that of Physiotherapists Tanya Stiver, Dean Lising, Dash Hrkal, Leslie Wolfe and Rhonda Erskine at William Osler Health Centre. The statements made in this column are for general information only; please consult your physician for personal medical advice. If you have comments on this column, please call our community contact line at 905-451-1710, ext. 2505 or e-mail us at oslerconnection@oslerhc.org.

Deanna Wilson B.Sc. D.Ch.
Chiroprapist - Foot Specialist

25 Main St. N., Acton

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