

Stretch'n into spring Back health tips for the outdoor enthusiast

Those eagerly awaited spring days are beckoning outdoor enthusiasts everywhere. Whether you are a green thumb or an outdoor sports or recreation enthusiast, it is important to remember some basics of back care prior to exerting your muscles and joints.

News for green thumbs

Spring gardening does not have to be a pain in the back. The Alberta College and Association of Chiropractors (ACAC) offers these tips to help you enjoy the fruits of your labors during this gardening season:

- Stretch before you head out. Take the time to prepare your body for activity and always warm up and cool down your muscles.
- Bend your knees to lift with ease. Keep heavy loads such as potting soil close to your body, your back straight and bend your knees while picking up and putting down loads.
- Use the right moves and the right tools. Alternate your tasks, kneel to plant and weed, change positions frequently, pace yourself and always make sure that gardening tools are a comfortable weight and size for you.
- Take a break before it aches. Get up, move around, alternate tasks, repeat your stretch routine or sit back, relax and have a cool drink.

Outdoor sports tips

If spring gardening is not your thing, you may want to start getting your body geared up for outdoor activities such as soccer, tennis or golf. If you are a parent of a young sports enthusiast, it is equally important to help them prepare for outdoor activities.

The ACAC offers these training tips for spring sports:

- Warm up your muscles before exercise. Proper warm up and stretching will help prevent injuries and strains on muscles and joints.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of fluids before, during and after physical activity to ensure proper hydration.
- Proper nutrition is essential. A good, balanced breakfast and eating a healthy meal before and after practice or a game provides proper nutrient replenishment and refuels the body.
- Safety and injury prevention are important when young athletes take to the field. Ensure your child wears suitable clothing and proper equipment that fits

correctly.

• Ensure your budding star gets plenty of rest. Eight to ten hours of sleep is essential for a growing and energetic young athlete. Lack of proper rest can catch up with your child and decrease performance—not to mention increase the chances of injury.

If you or your child experiences a sports-related injury, seek professional health care attention. Doctors of chiropractic are trained to treat strains and sprains in all age groups and can provide advice on sports training, nutrition and injury prevention for young athletes. More information, including how to find a chiropractor in your area, is available at www.albertachiro.com.

—News Canada



**April is
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FIGHT AGAINST
CANCER!**

April brings with it Daffodil Days, uniting everyone in the fight against cancer! The Canadian Cancer Society invites us to unite all of our efforts against this terrible illness that affects young and old alike. Cancer targets 38% of Canadian women and 44% of Canadian men in the course of their lives. These statistics have a face, it could be that of your mother, your brother, your daughter, your best friend or a co-worker... Take up the fight against cancer!

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Across Canada thousands of volunteers will be selling small bouquets of daffodils. Not only does this campaign raise money for research, it also raises awareness of the fight against the leading cause of premature death in the country.

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Daffodil Days volunteers make up an impressive contingent dedicated to eradicating cancer in Canada. In the coming days be prepared to give generously in exchange for a daffodil bouquet. In giving to the Canadian Cancer Society by purchasing your bouquet of daffodils, you become part of a national team fighting against this terrible disease.

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