

Physio News

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WEED OUT THE SORENESS

The most important gardening tool is the human body. Proper body positioning, well designed gardening gloves and tools along with frequent rest breaks are the key to being a healthy gardener. Gardening is an active pursuit that can cause muscle strain to the lower back, shoulders, knees and arms, especially for those who are out of shape and do not move properly.

With its focus on crouching, bending, reaching and lifting, gardeners need to prepare and be aware of their bodies. Aches, pains, sprains and sometimes even a fracture can result from improper positioning of the body, overuse of specific muscle groups, poor gardening technique and pushing to work harder and longer than needed.

Whether you're a master gardener or budding amateur, Eramosa Physiotherapy Associates recommend that enthusiasts follow these safety tips for tackling the gardening chores:

Begin with a warm up – Start with easy raking, or go for a five-minute walk to warm up your muscles. Follow this with stretching all major muscle groups to help prevent injury.

Be aware of your posture and body mechanics – Move your feet instead of twisting at your waist when sweeping, raking, mulching or potting. If you can't avoid twisting, tighten your stomach muscles in order to protect your back. Use your legs rather than your back when lifting or unloading heavy bags or pots. Bend your knees, keep your back straight, and hold the object close to your body to prevent unnecessary strain on your back.

Use ergonomically correct tools – Buy tools with long handles to help with weeding. Build or buy a potting bench that is high enough to prevent unnecessary bending. Sit on the ground to trowel without bending over. When kneeling use a knee pad to avoid putting too much pressure on your knees.

Pace Yourself – Take breaks throughout your work and do some gentle stretching to keep limber. Vary tasks to make sure different muscles get used and one particular muscle group is not overworked.

Raking or hoeing – keep your tools close to your body and your back straight to reduce strain. Use your arms and avoid twisting your trunk. Use long-handled tools suited to your height.

Weeding or planting – do not bend from the waist. Squat or kneel on a kneeling pad. If you have difficulty getting up, use a kneeling pad / bench with a support handle for assistance.

Digging or shoveling – insert the head of the shovel vertically into the ground and step on the blade. Lift small amounts at a time and bend at the knees, using your legs not your back to lift the load. Avoid twisting. Use a wheelbarrow to move big or heavy loads.

- Spread heavy lifting and digging tasks over a week rather than a weekend, and spread major projects throughout the seasons.

Lifting or carrying – know your limits and lift properly: bend your knees, not your back. Keep the load close to your body. A four-wheeled cart is sturdier and easier to use than a wheelbarrow;

Pruning or trimming – get as close to your work as possible. Don't stretch beyond your reach or past your stable footing. Rehearse the movement as a stretch first to test your ability and positioning.

- Match the size of the gardening tool handle to the size of your hand. Choose tools that you can hold so that your hand remains positioned in line with your forearm.

- Hold your tools in a loose comfortable grip. Holding too tightly may cause injury.

If you are injured while gardening, consult a registered physiotherapist. Physiotherapists have the knowledge and skills to help relieve pain, increase mobility, build strength, and improve balance and cardiovascular function. Our experienced physiotherapists will assess your injury and provide appropriate treatment to help get you back up to speed.

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Lacrosse Jaguars the class of their field

Seeded fifth out of eight teams at the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations' AAA/AAAA field lacrosse festival in Peterborough, Christ the King's Jaguars showed little regard for the rankings system, sweeping their three preliminary-round games on Wednesday by lopsided scores.

The Halton champion Jags throttled the top seed and host, St. Andrew's, 13-3, in their opening game.

Christ the King then beat Paul Dwyer of Oshawa 12-5 and Peterborough's Stewart S.S. to earn first place in its pool, setting up a semifinal matchup with second-ranked Holy Cross of Peterborough in Thursday

morning's semifinal. The championship was scheduled for Thursday afternoon.



GABBY KOSZIWKA & ASHLEY NIXON

BEACH VOLLEYBALL: Limehouse residents Ashley Nixon and Gabby Kosziwka claimed a third consecutive Ontario

Volleyball Association girls' doubles title for their age group at the provincial beach volleyball championships recently at Ashbridge's Bay in Toronto.

The soon-to-be Acton District High School grads breezed through the preliminary round with a 5-1 record to win their pool and routed the opposition in the semis by scores of 21-6, 21-3.

In the final match, the Bearcat duo prevailed 21-14, 21-17.

GIRLS' SOFTBALL: Christ the King's season came to a close Wednesday with an 11-0 loss to Holy Trinity at Oakville in the Halton semifinals. Holy Trinity met T.A. Blakelock in Thursday's championship.



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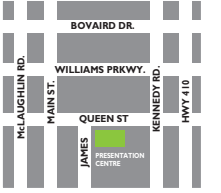


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