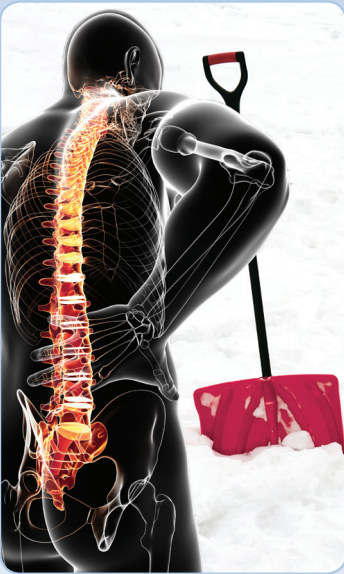


HealthLine

February 2015

Old Man Winter Can Be a Pain in the Back



With Jack Frost nipping at your nose, it's possible that the weather outside could get frightful. Before picking up a shovel, keep in mind that lower back injuries increase during winter months. This increase can partially be attributed to shoveling snow. Between improper body mechanics, tight muscles, over-exertion, and inadequate equipment, shoveling snow can often lead to muscle strains and tears, falls, or serious injuries.

Here are some tips before you pick up a shovel:

- Spread salt, sand, or kitty litter to minimize the chances of slipping or falling.
- Wear gloves with grips and boots with tread, so you can stay warm and have better grip and traction.
- Avoid bending at the waist and twisting; try moving small amounts of snow, by pushing, not lifting and throwing.
- Take short breaks every 10-15 minutes and stay hydrated.
- Stop shoveling if you get fatigued or feel any pain.

Despite our best efforts to prevent injury, occasionally something goes wrong. The main diagnosis following a snow shoveling injury is lumbago, which is a general term for lower back pain. It is

identified by constant, achy pain that gets sharper with certain positions and body movements, along with stiffness.

If your back pain is still present after three days of rest and over the counter anti-inflammatories, you should see your physical therapist or doctor. At **HealthQuest** we offer free consultations to diagnose what is troubling you. We use a variety of physical therapy techniques to offer immediate relief, as well as treatment plans that will address the actual cause of your lower back pain. As you heal, your core stability, flexibility, and total body strength, will become a part of your routine to help prevent future injury.

At **HealthQuest** our therapists are trained to diagnose and treat back pain through special continuing education courses in spinal modalities. From your initial evaluation to your final appointment, we will work with you to create a program to treat the root cause of your pain, not just focus on your symptoms. By the time you complete your course of therapy, you will be ready to tackle whatever old man winter throws at you!

"Back pain is one of the most common medical problems, affecting 8 out of 10 people at some point during their lives."

- The U.S. National Library of Medicine

At **HealthQuest** we motivate, educate and rehabilitate, in our quest to help people live life well!
Call us toll free at 1-855-**HQPT**-4-ME
to schedule your Free Consultation or training session!

Exercise Essentials | Easy Lower Back Stretches

Always consult your physical therapist or physician before starting an exercise regimen.



Pelvic Tilt

- While lying on your back, tighten your stomach muscles while pressing your back into the floor. Hold for three seconds. Perform three sets of ten, twice daily.



Bridging

- While lying on your back, flatten your lower back against the floor. Squeeze your buttocks and raise up off the floor. Hold for three seconds and return. Perform three sets of ten, once daily.

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HealthQuestion...

Which Detroit sports team has had only one head coach since 2005?

Visit **www.HQPT.com** and click on: **HealthQuest** Answer the Health Question (located on the left side of the page). If you answer correctly, you will be entered in a drawing to win a \$100 Gas Card! (Contest closes on February 28, 2015)



Congratulations to our January HealthQuest winner, Michael Bressler, from Birmingham!

Patient Results....

"I have my life back."

When I started at HealthQuest I had severe back pain that was debilitating. I was originally told that I more than likely required surgery, but agreed to try therapy first to see if it could help. Seven weeks later my pain levels have almost completely diminished and I have avoided surgery and have my life back! Thank you HealthQuest for your dedication, commitment, and expertise.

-Bill R., Oxford, MI



Ask the Therapist...

Question:

What will make my back pain worse?

Answer:

The absolute worst thing you can do for back pain is doing NOTHING! The first step is find out what is causing your pain. A Physical Therapist (PT) will perform an exam to determine what is causing your pain and rule out any other potential conditions that would require other treatment. Once the PT has determined that you are a good candidate for physical therapy, you will be instructed on ways to modify your activities and begin a program that will put you on the road to recovery. People are often surprised that a full recovery is not only possible, but very common once they know what to do!

Question:

The medication helps me tolerate my back pain but how long can I keep taking it?

Answer:

The problem with medication is that unless it is taken in conjunction with therapy, you are not addressing the cause of the pain. It may alleviate the symptoms, but you need to determine what the problem is. Your physical therapist can help you with a program that is set up to allow the injured area to heal and then promote a strength and conditioning program to make sure you avoid future problems. This will put you in control of the situation and get you moving properly and pain free!



This month's Ask the Therapist is brought to you by Robb Aikens, Vice President of Operations for HealthQuest.

I have been a PT with HealthQuest my entire career. I first got interested in PT after a skiing accident, which led to multiple knee surgeries and a lot of therapy.

I met Bill Knight and Stuart Siegner, the founders of HealthQuest, in the early 90s and their enthusiasm for the physical therapy profession evoked my passion.

Since then, I have been having fun "helping people live life well" and I can't think of anything I would rather be a part of!



Share the Gift of Good Health!

Mention us to family & friends and for every new patient you refer, we will send you a \$25 gift card...our way of saying THANKS!

www.HQPT.com

HealthQuest

PHYSICAL THERAPY AND MEDICAL FITNESS

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Presorted
Standard
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PAID
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Service

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO
LIVE WITH BACK PAIN!**

We Can Help!

Welcome to Direct Access!

We are on a quest for a life of improved health and fitness, and we want you with us every step of the way.



Physical Therapists are trained in musculoskeletal issues, with a minimum of eight years of specific schooling. Most therapists go beyond the basic training for their careers with continued education courses, which gives them even further certifications in specialized fields.

Until now, in the state of Michigan, you needed a prescription from your doctor to get physical therapy. As of January 1, 2015, this is no longer the case. You will be allowed to begin treatment with a physical therapist at your first sign of symptoms.

Stay tuned for future articles about "Direct Access" and the future of preventative healthcare,

Call us Toll Free TODAY to schedule your FREE Consultation!

1-855-HQPT-4-ME



10 LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU

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(248) 922-9001

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