The Low Down on Your Low Back

Back pain is very common, and even more common among farmers. Most back pain gets better on its own, but in some cases it is better to seek professional care. Physiotherapists can help you continue to do what you love to do.

Managing Your Low Back

- Stand up and move around as often as you can
- Stay physically active outside of work by walking, running, biking or participating in other activities
- Support the curve of your lower back when sitting as shown in the photo
- Lift objects close to body and avoid twisting
- Get good quality sleep, manage stress and overall health
- Stretch as often as you can throughout the day
- Sample stretches can be found at: http://aghealth.usask.ca/resources/documents/BackSafetyResource.pdf

What to do When You Have Low Back Pain

- Stay as active as you can tolerate
- Avoid bed rest – movement is good for your back
- Apply heat and/or ice for 10-15 minutes
    - Avoid laying directly on heat or ice
    - Use towel barrier between skin and ice/heat

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When to see a Physiotherapist

- When your low back pain disrupts your sleep and daily routine
- When you are unable to manage your low back pain
- When you experience the following changes:
  - Sensation changes (numbness, tingling, burning)
  - Altered bowel and/or urinary control
  - Pain spreading away from the back into the legs and toes
  - Morning stiffness present for over an hour

Questions to ask your Physiotherapist

- Do you have extended hours?
- Can I reach you over the phone/email if I have an issue and I am unable to make it to an appointment?
- Do you travel or make house calls?
- How can I support my lower back while working?
- Can I get a take home handout of my exercises to use for future reference?

How can Physiotherapy help?

- Provide a comprehensive assessment and recommendations
- Tailor a treatment plan to help you to reduce pain and prevent future low back pain which may include:
  - -specific exercises
  - -manual treatment
  - -other approaches
- Physiotherapists treat a range of health conditions, not only back pain
- To find a physiotherapist near you, visit **www.saskphysio.org** .

Want to learn more?

Self Care: http://www.spine-health.com/conditions/lower-back-pain/back-care-lower-back-pain

Back Safety for farmers:http://aghealth.usask.ca/resources/documents/BackSafetyResource.pdf

Youtube Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOjTegn9RuY

THE AGRICULTURAL HEALTH & SAFETY NETWORK

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