

health matters

Sunday, August 28, 2005

Volume 2, Issue 8



Rewarding Healthy Moms and Babies...

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health matters
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El Centro
Regional Medical Center
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Imperial Valley SPINE CENTER Opens...



R. David Sibley, M.D., IVSC Medical Director

An innovative, non-invasive method of treating back pain and many spinal injuries has been added to the rehabilitation therapy services offered by the El Centro Regional Medical Center.

The new service, known as the Imperial Valley Spine Center, is located at 1301 S. Imperial Avenue, directly across from the El Centro Regional Medical Center. The hospital has acquired the building under a long-term lease and has remodeled it to conform to the needs of the Spine Center.

The Center's medical director is R. David Sibley, M.D., who has pioneered and developed this unique non-operative treatment method over the last 12 years. A board certified orthopedic surgeon, he now limits his practice to refining the treatment program.

The Center focuses on advanced non-operative treatment for chronic lower back pain, sports injuries, and pain management to restore function and relieve pain. Dr. Sibley initially used this approach to

enhance surgical results, but later found many of his patients could be effectively treated without surgery.

Dustin Bonham, Director of Physical Therapy, will oversee Center operations as an extension of the hospital's present Outpatient Rehabilitation Department. He has undergone training in Dr. Sibley's techniques.

Dr. Sibley received his medical degree from Loma Linda University and in addition to being board certified is a fellow in the American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons.

Incorporated as SpineCare Inc., The Sibley organization also has offices in Beverly Hills and in the Beach Cities Health Center in Redondo Beach.

"We are proud to have Dr. Sibley and the Spine Center as part of our rehabilitation services," said David R. Green, chief executive officer of El Centro Regional Medical Center. "His innovative techniques enhance recovery from back injuries and will add significantly to the services of our Rehabilitation Department."

A new patient first has a thorough examination by an orthopedic physician using the program's diagnostic approaches that involve computer assisted testing, MRI and CT scans and other tools to determine the exact cause of pain. The findings of this evaluation are used to create a specific

treatment program using computer-assisted technology. Orthopedically trained therapists assist in the treatments.



The healing procedure includes increasing nutrition to the cartilage and discs by using isolated motion and supplements; stimulating tissue and cartilage growth and repair with progressive resistance, and using state-of-the-art technology to isolate troublesome segments of the spine.

The Center is open from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. Appointments may be scheduled by telephoning 482-0160.

REDUCING Prostate Cancer Risks

There's a lot medical science does not know about prostate cancer. The incidence of prostate cancer is low among Italian men in Italy, for instance, and researchers think it might have something to do with lycopene, a chemical found in cooked tomatoes. They eat a lot of marinara sauce with their pasta.

The jury is still out on that and may other research approaches now underway. But there is a lot that is known and Dr. Theodore Affue, an urologist serving this year as vice-chief of staff at El Centro Regional Medical Center, is quick to point out that prostate cancer, for all the negative statistics surrounding it, is easy to detect, treatable and often curable.

Prostate cancer ranks number four worldwide as a chief cause of death among males. It tops the list of cancer deaths in men.

It is the physician's job to determine how aggressively to treat each case. Dr. Affue sees surgery or radiation therapy as the only approach for malignant cases. Other cases are often manageable through natural supplements, chemo-therapy, some experimental vaccines and in some cases the use of a hormonal treatment. Prostate



cancer needs male hormones to grow, and a shot or a pill can suppress those hormones, reducing growth.

Physicians have two ways of detecting prostate cancer, through physical examination and through a Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test. Any reading over 4.0 is suspicious.

Dr. Affue suggests men with a family history of prostate cancer see an urologist at age 40 for a PSA test. Men with no family history should see the physician by age 50.

He looks upon prostate cancer as a major health care issue in Imperial Valley as statistics show more than 10 percent of men in any population area have prostate cancer by age 65 and nearly five percent have it as early as age 50. Three out of four men



Theodore Affue, M.D., Chief of Staff Elect, former Department of Surgery Chair. For additional information call 353-8181

75 years of age or older are afflicted. But he cautions against becoming over alarmed as the prospects for quality of life in treatable cases generally is good.



BACK HEALTH: Taking Care Of Your Back

It is estimated that over 1 million people each year sustain back injuries with many cases going unreported. Even with these incredibly high numbers, there is some good news. Many of these injuries can be prevented if people would follow 4 simple rules.

1) Use proper lifting techniques at all times: This is the easiest way to prevent back injuries but ironically it's the number one cause of back problems. When you bend over to pick up an object without bending your knees, the pressure exerted on your

back is 170% more than the normal pressure. therefore you are always at risk when lifting improperly, regardless of the size of the object you are lifting. The following is the correct sequence for lifting:

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Center of Healthcare Excellence

(Back Health, from page 1)

BACK HEALTH: Taking Care of Your Back

I. Get as close to the object as you can.

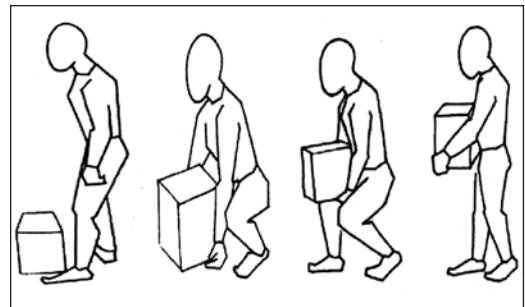
II. Tighten your stomach and keep your back straight.

III. Slowly bend at the knees and grab the object (avoid twisting at all times).

IV. Slowly lift the object and hold it close to your body.

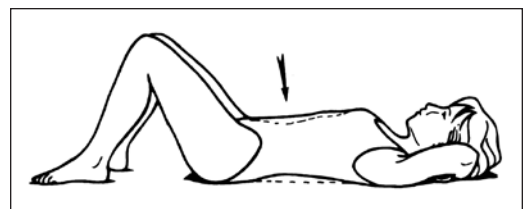
V. Rise to a standing position, keeping the object close to you the entire time.

The following is an example of the correct lifting technique:

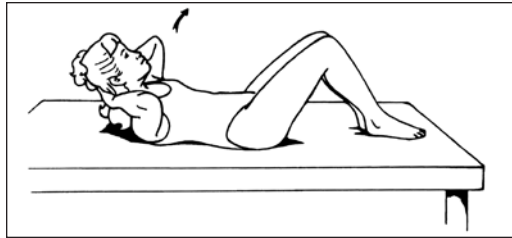


2) Maintain your core strength (stomach and back muscles): The external obliques (the muscles on the side of your stomach) are indirectly connected to the vertebrae of your lower back. When these muscles are strong, they serve the same purpose as a back brace but when they are weak, you lose a tremendous amount of stability in your lower back. Of equal importance is the strength of the muscles in your lumbar spine. These muscles also provide an incredible amount of support to your lumbar spine and when they are weak the likelihood that you will injure your back greatly increases.

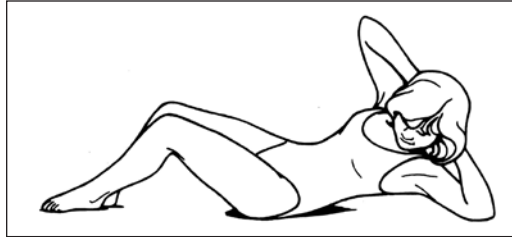
The following are a few exercises to increase your core strength:



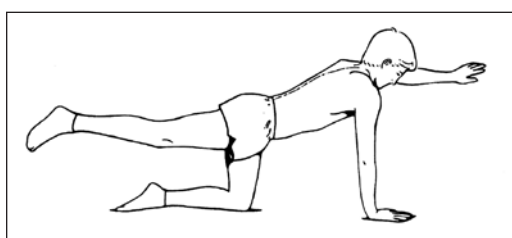
Pelvic Tilt: Flatten back by tightening stomach muscles and buttocks. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 20 times. Do 1 session per day.



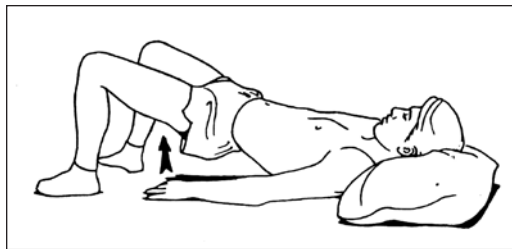
Curl-Up: Keeping hands clasped behind to support the neck, tilt pelvis to flatten back. Raise head and shoulders from surface. Hold for 1 second. Repeat 60 times. Do 1 session per day.



Diagonal Curl-Up: Keeping hands clasped behind head to support neck, tilt pelvis to flatten back. Raise head and shoulders from floor while rotating to one side. Hold for 1 second. Repeat 30 times each side. Do 1 session per day.



Quadruped Opposite Upper and Lower Extremity Extension: Tighten stomach and simultaneously raise leg and opposite arm. Hold for 10 seconds, then slowly return to starting position, keeping trunk rigid. Repeat 10 times. Do 1 session per day.

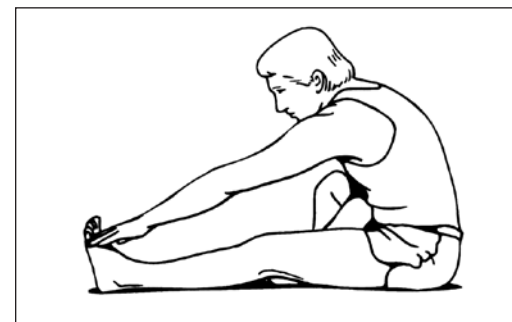


Bridging: Slowly raise buttocks from floor, keeping stomach tight. Hold for 1 second. Repeat 20 times. Do 1 session per day.

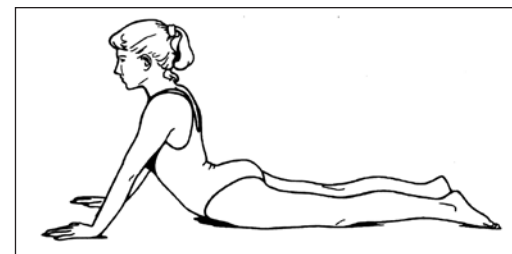
3) Keep your hamstrings (the muscles in the back of your upper leg) and your lower back

flexible: When your hamstrings become tight, you can begin to rotate your hips backwards, causing a condition known as "flat-back" (see posture chart below). When this occurs, excessive strain is placed on your lower back and the nerves exiting your vertebral column. When you fail to maintain flexibility of your lower back, all of the joints, muscles and ligaments become tight. Consequently, movements that normally would not produce any strain become potential causes of injury.

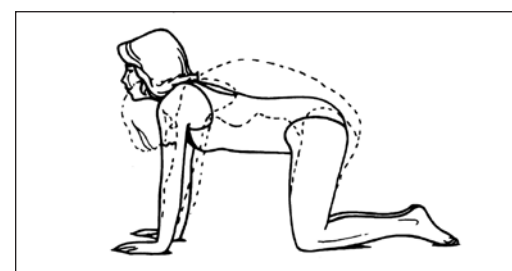
The following are ideal exercises for stretching your hamstrings and lower back:



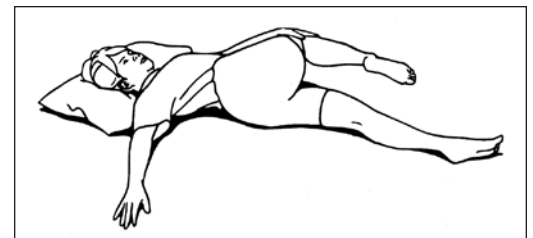
Hamstring Stretch: Reach down along leg until a comfortable stretch is felt in back of thigh. Be sure to keep knee straight. Hold for 60 seconds. Repeat 2 times with each leg. Do 1 session per day.



Press-Up: Press upper body upward into position shown, keeping hips in contact with floor. Keep lower back and buttocks relaxed. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 10 times. Do 1 session per day.



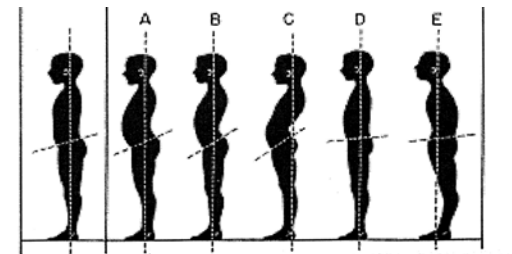
Angry Cat Stretch: Tuck chin and tighten stomach, arching back. Hold for 1 second. Repeat 20 times. Do 1 session per day.



Lumbar Rotation Stretch: Lie on back with right knee drawn toward chest. Slowly bring bent leg across body until stretch is felt in lower back/hip area. Hold for 60 seconds. Repeat 2 times per set. Do 1 session. Do 1 session per day.

Lumbar Rotation Stretch: Lie on back with left knee drawn toward chest. Slowly bring bent leg across body until stretch is felt in lower back/hip area. Hold for 60 seconds. Repeat 2 times per set. Do 1 session. Do 1 session per day.

4) Keep the weight off: This is the most difficult of all 4 rules to do but it is extremely important for a healthy back. When you have a protruded abdomen (excessive size of the stomach), your hips slowly begin to rotate forward. When this happens, the natural curve of your lower back increases (as shown in the chart below). As a result, extra pressure is placed on the nerves exiting your vertebrae because the hole they pass through becomes smaller when the curve of your back increases, resulting in a very painful condition.



So the keys to a healthy back are straightforward and fairly easy to do. With just a few minutes of exercise per day along with safety awareness, you can significantly decrease your chances of having an unnecessary back injury.

**** As always, please consult with your physician prior to initiating any exercise routine.****

Content provided by ECRMC Outpatient Rehabilitation Director, Dustin Bonham, MPT. For additional information contact: 339-7169.

Rewarding Healthy Moms and Babies



Many new parents leave El Centro Regional Medical Center with their infant safely belted into in a brand new car seat, a parting gift from the hospital.

This is not just a hospital promotion. It has a serious underlying purpose-- to encourage prospective new mothers to obtain proper prenatal care and appropriate

childbirth education, the kind of childbirth preparation that translates into healthier mothers and infants.

Roberta Webster, a patient educator in the hospital's Education Department, said the criteria established to qualify for receiving an infant car seat are designed to accomplish this: The patient should begin prenatal care with a private physician before the 16th week of pregnancy, see her doctor at least 10 times prior to delivering, and attend the hospital's "prenatal" classes. The delivery must take place at El Centro Regional Medical Center.

Joan Hill, Director of Maternal/Child services, said the hospital now averages about 120 births each month and she estimates 98 percent of the parents receive car seats upon discharge. "It's part of our commitment to our patients," adds Jose. "Sort of like putting our arms around these

little ones and encouraging their families to keep them safe."

Webster is the instructor for the childbirth preparation classes the hospital offers on a regular basis as part of its community education outreach. In addition to classes on childbirth, in both English and Spanish, the hospital offers classes on care of the newborn, CPR and First-Aid for infants, and breastfeeding. They also have a breastfeeding support group. Based on demand, Daddy Classes are also offered.

Webster said the car seat program originated with a state-funded Comprehensive Peri-natal Services Program in 1989, but the state ultimately dropped the car seat phase of the program and the hospital took it over.

The seats are designed to serve the infant for one year, or up to a weight of 20 pounds.



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Staff Writer Robert V. Liggett

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