

Woodstown Physical Therapy and Sports Rehab

Preventing Back Pain While Gardening

Gardening is a popular hobby which offers the chance to relax, relieves stress, expresses creativity and helps the environment...all while getting exercise. The many rigors of gardening can lead to increased chances for strain or injury. By following these tips, you can reduce your chance of developing a back problem and enjoy the gardening season.

Digging

- Position the shovel in front of you with the blade parallel to your hips.
- Place your front foot on the shovel and lean forward with a straight spine, allowing your weight to sink the shovel into the dirt.
- Shift weight onto your back leg, bending at your hips and knees and begin lifting the dirt. Lower your body by bending at your hips and especially at your knees to bring the shovel and dirt out.
- Stand upright and move your body to where the dirt needs to go, turning the shovel for the dirt to fall off. Avoid strain by not twisting or throwing the dirt!

Weeding

- Keep your spine in an elongated position by:
 - Bending your legs, placing one leg in front and the other in back with your weight equally distributed
 - Using a bucket to stay closer to the ground.
- Maintain a wide base of support while standing, propping one arm on your thigh as a brace.

Lifting

- Maintain a wide base of support, feet farther than shoulder width.
- Bend at your hips and knees, avoiding bending at the waist and keeping your spine long.
- Keep your arms and whatever you're lifting close to your body as you stand upright and carry the item to the garden.

Prevention Tips

- Take frequent breaks. Stand up straight and walk around for a bit.
- Standing back bends can decrease the negative effects of bending forward.
- Do these by placing your hands on your low back and bending backwards with knees straight 10-20 times.

If you are experiencing any pain or difficulty, consult your physician as soon as possible and ask for a prescription for physical therapy. Studies show that early intervention helps speed recovery and our professionally licensed staff can effectively treat any injury you sustain!

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