

**SERVICES
OFFERED:**

- **Physiotherapy**
- **Massage
Therapy**
- **Lymphatic
Drainage**
- **Injury
Prevention
Lectures**
- **Certified
Pedorthic
(orthotic)
Assessments**
- **Family Practice
and Walk-in
Clinic**
- **Custom & Off-
the-shelf
Bracing**
- **Sports
Nutrition**
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Psychology**

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Osteo-what ?? Osteoarthritis and Osteoporosis – Understanding the Differences

By Karen Decker, BScPT, BScK, FCAMT

Often times it is difficult to keep up with the medical jargon being discussed in the media and even with our own physicians and other healthcare professionals. The diagnoses of Osteoarthritis and Osteoporosis sound very similar and are often confused for one another. The problem is, despite sharing the same prefix, the two conditions are quite different from one another. They can both lead to decreased mobility and involve dysfunction of bone; however, the process, usual victims, signs and symptoms, how activity is affected, and treatment/management are very different.

Reviewing the table below will help you to differentiate these conditions from each other. This is important because early diagnosis and correct management are key to maintaining mobility. Remember, osteoarthritis and osteoporosis are progressive disorders without a permanent cure. However, reducing risk factors and addressing warning signs can often help to slow the rate of progression and prolong a safe and active lifestyle.



| | OSTEOARTHRITIS | OSTEOPOROSIS |
|--|--|---|
| Disease process | Gradual, progressive loss of cartilage in joints; causing bony spurs and cysts at the margins of the joint | Breakdown of bony matrix causing decreased bone density and increased risk of fracture |
| Most commonly affected population & areas of the body | Men/women >60 yrs (often earlier) Hands, knees and hips Lumbar spine (low back) Cervical spine (neck) | Post-menopausal women (>50yrs) Spine Hip Forearm |
| Risk factors | Aging Past injury Prolonged poor posture Overuse of joints Excess weight Poor footwear | Slight build Smoker Family history Eating disorder Low dietary calcium intake Excessive alcohol intake |
| Signs & Symptoms | Stiffening of joints/limited movement Tender over joint line Loss of strength Swollen, hot inflamed joints Pain with weight bearing (ie: standing) | Often none Fractures with seemingly little trauma |
| Best management | Non-weight bearing sports/exercise: - Resistance training - Aerobic exercise with low impact (bike, swimming) - Flexibility exercise (stretching/ joint mobilization) - Proprioception retraining (balance exercise) | Weight bearing exercise: - Resistance training with weight/load bearing (squats/lunges/pushups) - Aerobic exercise with light to moderate impact (walk/hike/skip) |
| Do's | Maintain a healthy weight Visit a physiotherapist who can: - Provide exercise/education/therapy to address your risk factors - Use manual therapy to relieve stiff joints - Use modalities to relieve pain and inflammation (electrical current, acupuncture, ice/heat) - Provide information regarding footwear selection, bracing, home and/or work modifications - Co-ordinate treatment with massage therapy | Pay close attention to your diet – more calcium/vitamin D intake Visit a physiotherapist who can: - Complete a thorough assessment of general and specific flexibility and strength - Prescribe a progressive and safe resistance training program - Complete a postural assessment and provide exercise to improve/maintain joint alignment - Coordinate treatment with massage therapy |
| Don'ts | Participate in heavy joint loading exercise (e.g. running/jumping sports); depending on stage of degeneration | Begin heavy impact activity without the guidance of a healthcare professional |

Gardening Tips By Melissa Plaster, Registered Massage Therapist

With spring comes the endless lawn mowing, raking and weeding. It is all for the love you have for your garden but unfortunately, with hard work in the yard and garden, back pain will strike many people.

There are certain precautions you can take in order to avoid the muscle aches and pains that your favourite hobby can leave you with. First you need to take your time, don't try and get everything done in just one day! You need to treat gardening just as you would any other form of exercise. A warm up routine, like stretching for example, is a great way to keep those lower back muscles loose.



Follow these simple guidelines to avoid injuring yourself when lifting soil or fertilizer:

- Stand as close as possible to the object you want to pick up*
- Bend down with your knees, keeping your back as straight as possible*
- Hold the object close to your body, use your legs to do the lifting, not your back!*
- Never bend or twist your back when lifting*
- If you can move your object without lifting always push, don't pull!*

If you suffer from chronic back pain and still have a love of gardening, a wide variety of gardening products designed specifically for your needs are available.

- Tools that have longer handles mean you won't have to bend over as far to accomplish tasks.
- Knee pads are especially important to use, never sit on the heels of your feet.
- Use a weed control product as well as mulch to cover your garden's bed.

You must remember to take frequent breaks and never remain in one position for more than 5-10 minutes.

During your break, stretch or walk around to help keep muscles loose and relaxed. Staying well hydrated while gardening will make your muscles less likely to rebel with aches and pains after activity.

After gardening, use a heating pad on sore muscles or ice on sore joints to help decrease pain. Massage therapy can also reduce post-activity soreness in muscles that have been overused. If you experience persistent back pain or pain that becomes worse, you should always consult your family doctor or physiotherapist.

For more gardening tips and specific stretches, visit the Canadian Physiotherapy Association website at:

<http://www.physiotherapy.ca/PublicUploads/225658Smart%20Gardening.pdf>

Seven Ways Massage Therapy can Improve your Golf Game

By Dave Green, Registered Massage Therapist

1. **Increased blood and lymph circulation** Several massage strokes increase the movement of blood and lymph. Massage is beneficial for many reasons, but the most important one is circulation. If a muscle is stiff because of a long day on the course, getting oxygenated blood to the area improves the condition rapidly.
2. **Muscle relaxation** Massage can help relax muscles and return them to normal health and physical condition. With your golf muscles relaxed they will function efficiently, **reducing the risk of "strain,"** and producing consistently better shots.
3. **Pain relief** Massage can relieve pain caused by muscle tension. If you're experiencing pain, your body will automatically alter your swing to protect itself. These alterations often make your swing less effective.
4. **Adhesion removal and Fibrosis alleviation** An adhesion exists when two tissues are joined by scar tissue following an injury or disease. Fibrosis is formation of excessive or abnormal scar tissue after an injury. Massage, is effective in breaking down such adhesions and resolves this condition. The repetitive motion of a golf swing, if done incorrectly, can

cause injuries in the back, knees, elbows, shoulders, and wrists that lead to adhesions/fibrosis requiring treatment.

5. **Stress reduction** Many forms of massage promote general relaxation and reduction of physical, emotional and mental stress. When you are stressed, you're often unconsciously clenching your shoulders and arms. This is counterproductive to the normal motion of the joint and tight muscles severely restrict your golf swing. Because massage reduces anxiety and gives the sense of well-being, this allows the golfer to stay relaxed and **swing more fluidly.** Being relaxed and feeling good allows one to play better.
6. **Fatigue reduction** Massage has been used to help relieve the fatigue associated with sports activities. Post-round massage increases circulation in the muscle tissues, helping to prevent build-up of harmful "fatigue" products resulting from strenuous exercise and competition.
7. **Movement therapy** (joint mobilization) and hydrotherapy are both components of massage therapy. Stretching is one of the best ways to improve flexibility, promoting elasticity to various muscle groups with almost immediate results. A golfer will often notice increased flexibility after only one or two sessions. **If you have limited flexibility, massage therapy may help you and your game move in the right direction!**



Announcements

Welcome to our 2 new Registered Massage Therapists:

Kielly Christie
David Green

Congratulations to **Melissa Plaster** and **Heather Purvis** for completing an introductory course in lymphatic drainage

Infant massage classes are currently being offered by Melissa Plaster in 4-5 week sessions

Congratulations to **Laura Lundquist** (PT) for successfully obtaining her Certificate in Sports Physiotherapy

