

Decrease Gardening Injuries

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Spring is here! The anticipation not only brings great weather but room for injuries that can change your Spring outlook. Follow these useful tips to help you garden safely.

- Avoid strenuous activity during the hottest hours of the day, 11-4pm.
- Keep heavy loads close to the body (center of gravity) to reduce straining of neck and back. If possible divide large loads into smaller ones.
- Raise by straightening knees, not lifting at the waist.
- Do not over exert, know your limitations.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water before, during and after. Avoid alcohol and caffeinated beverages.
- Don't work too long in one position. This reduces circulation and causes strain injuries.
- Avoid bending repeatedly. Get closer to ground-level work by kneeling using a pad or bench.
- Use long handled tools to give you leverage. This will prevent muscle strains.
- Don't overexpose yourself to long periods in the sun. Use sunscreen, protective measures for your body and head.
- Alternate hands when doing prolong raking, digging or sweeping actions. Repetitive motion on one side will cause muscle, joint and/or postural problems.
- Take breaks and stretch. Excessive forward bending of the back and neck will cause muscular pain and lead to injuries.

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