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CONSULTATION TIMES

Consultations are by appointment.

Monday 8:00am – 6:30pm

Tuesday 8:00am – 6:30pm

Thursday 8:00am – 6:30pm

Friday 8:00am – 12:00pm

Saturday 8:00am – 1:00pm

YOUR CHIROPRACTOR

MARCH/APRIL 2020



Lose the pain and improve your game!

Have you ever sprinted for a backhand only to have a back spasm stop you in your tracks? Maybe you've been nursing spinal discomfort but it's affecting your serve and smash? Back pain is common in tennis players; your sport might be causing, or making your pain worse.

It's not surprising when you consider that the pressure placed on the spinal column while serving is a staggering eight times the force generated by running. Serving requires hyperextension, which can compress your spinal joints. Front and backhand shots require sudden side and twisting movements. As you toss, stretch, run, and bend with force, sometimes something gives!

According to the International Tennis Federation, 95% of players who experience low back pain have what's called the 'non-specific' type. That means most problems stem from muscle and spine related injuries, the kind your chiropractor specialises in. The good news is there are ways to enjoy your passion and ease your pain.

These four important steps will help you to strengthen, support and heal your back, and improve your tennis game.

Warm up: A sufficient warm up is important to prepare your body. Five minutes of cardio, then taking your joints through their range of motion and practicing your strokes will get you ready for your game.

Professional advice: Have a tennis professional check your style, playing posture and the suitability of your racquet. The right amount of knee bend and strong muscles that fire in the correct sequence, reduce dysfunction and discomfort. Strokes performed with the right technique can increase power while lessening pain and chance of injury.

Practice the bird dog: The bird dog is a strengthening exercise that focuses on toning the core and back muscles together. Kneel on all fours. Flatten your back and brace your stomach muscles. Lift one arm out straight in front and in line with your ear, at the same time that you extend the opposite leg straight behind. Ensure your posture is stable and then hold for 10 - 30 seconds. Return to the starting position, swap sides and repeat.

Switch up your serve: Serving is a serious business that places your back under significant strain. Converting to a lower force option, for example from a kick to a slice serve, will reduce the amount of back arch.

While lower back pain is common in tennis, other injuries can occur too. If your shoulder range of motion is restricted and it hurts to reach up, or to lie on that side, you might have a rotator cuff injury. Pain in the front of the knee, damage to the calf muscle or Achilles tendon, ankle sprains, and elbow and wrist problems are also frequent events. There is even a condition called 'tennis toe', where the toes hit the end of the shoe causing bruising under the nail.

Remember, playing tennis creates significant spinal and joint strain. Protect your game and playing future by caring for your body in health and in injury.

WHAT'S INSIDE

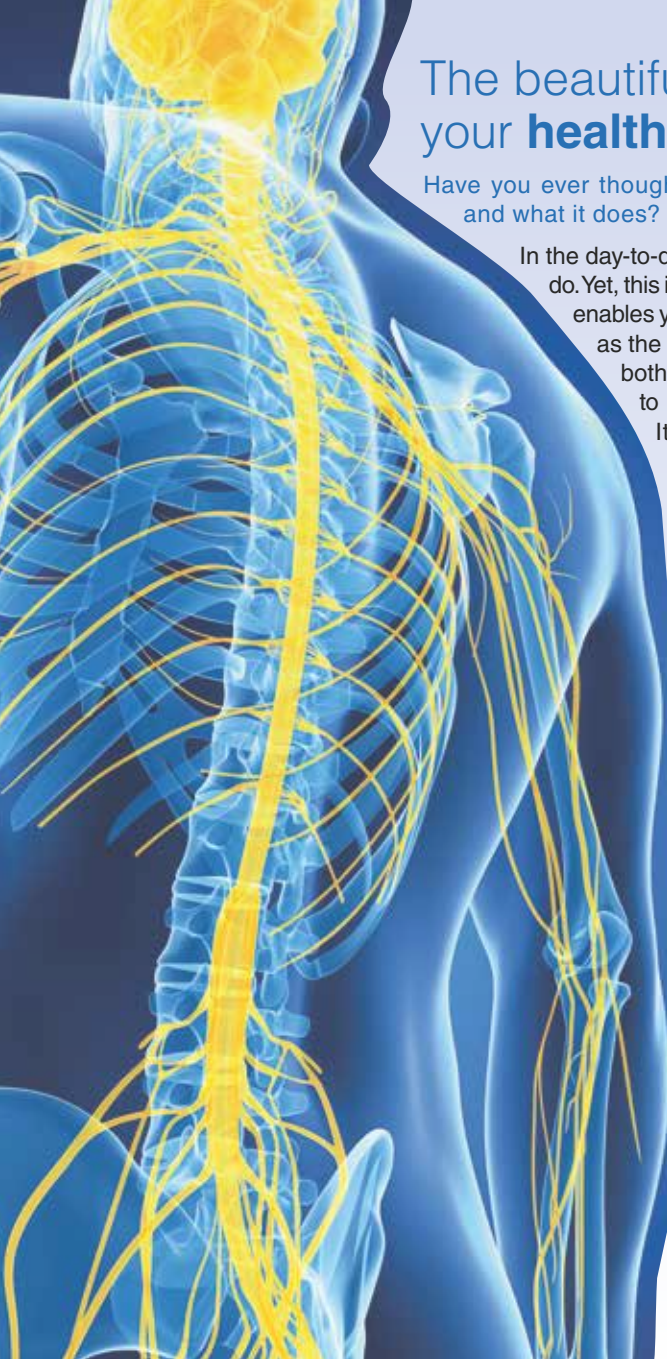
Your spine and your health

Is there a cure for cracking joints?

Health-harming handbags

The chocolate choice

Crossword corner



The beautiful partnership between **your spine** and **your health**

Have you ever thought about how your spine works and what it does?

In the day-to-day bustle of life, not many people do. Yet, this incredible piece of living machinery enables you to move, keep upright, and acts as the strong foundation for your body. It both protects and directly contributes to how your nervous system works. Its design, in essence, perfectly matches its function.

The spine consists of many bones (or vertebrae): seven cervical, twelve thoracic, and five lumbar vertebrae, plus the sacrum and the coccyx at the base. Most vertebrae are held together by facet joints, which click together like tongue and groove floorboards, and strong discs.

While the spine is incredibly strong and supportive, it also wields a secret power. It is key to brain function. As researcher and Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Roger Sperry, said, "Ninety percent of the stimulation and nutrition to the brain is generated by the movement of the spine." Motion of the spinal joints enables us to know where we are in space and contributes to movement control and co-ordination.

The spinal canal surrounds and encloses our spinal cord, protecting the delicate nerve tissue that is critical for the brain

and body to communicate. At each vertebral level, a pair of nerves exit. These spinal nerves stimulate muscles, skin, and the fight and flight and rest and relax systems. This enables us to move, feel, respond to threats, and to relax and recuperate.

Muscles attach one vertebra to the next and act to stabilise the spine, maintain posture, and enable movement. Ligaments also secure one bone to another, and provide mobile strength. The fascia provides another piece of the spinal puzzle. The fascia is a strong tissue that modulates tension and stiffness, and adds strength.

With its involvement in nervous system function, its support of the body, and the effect it has on wellbeing, it's no wonder chiropractors focus on caring for the spine! As spinal joints become jammed and underperform, muscles in the back become stressed and strained from poor posture, function decreases, and injury can occur with profound effects on your health.

As you can see, it's important to look after your spine. Daily exercise, a variety of fresh, nutrient-rich whole foods, maintaining an ideal weight, and being smoke-free are fundamental elements for spine health. Correct posture, appropriate lifting techniques, and strengthening and stretching muscles are also essential preventative steps.

Chiropractors offer a customised, drug-free, hands-on approach to spinal care. As well as helping with existing spinal health issues, they can assist you in maintaining healthy spinal practices that will improve your overall wellbeing.

Can **cracking joints** be cured?

Do your knuckles or ankles make a 'popping' noise? Maybe you click your joints through habit, or while trying to find relief from pain or restriction.

People often believe that cracking joints indicates underlying arthritis, or that popping our joints causes damage. Luckily, this is usually untrue. There are several reasons for this noise, most of which are not harmful.

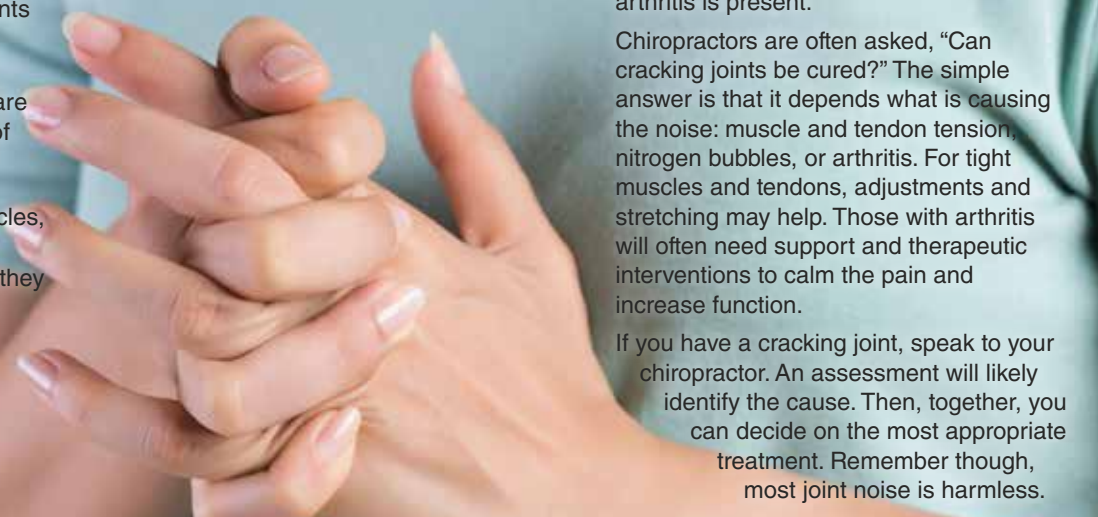
Tendons, the fibrous ends of our muscles, pass over bone. When we move, they sometimes snap against the bone as they move back into their original position, causing a click as they do so. This is common at the ankle, hip, knee, and in our shoulders. Tight muscles and tendons can be the cause of this, so stretching and practicing good posture are important.

Other times the popping sound is produced from inside a joint. As the involved joint moves, the pressure of the gases within it changes. This occurs from the popping of nitrogen bubbles found in the joint space and is the usual cause of the clicks from our knuckles and spine. It is a perfectly safe part of normal joint motion.

Sometimes though, joint noise can indicate arthritis. Technically called crepitus, it may be accompanied by pain and limited function in the involved joint, pain in the nearby muscles, stiffness, swelling and weakness. If you have a joint that cracks and causes pain, it's important to seek professional advice. Appropriate testing can help to identify whether arthritis is present.

Chiropractors are often asked, "Can cracking joints be cured?" The simple answer is that it depends what is causing the noise: muscle and tendon tension, nitrogen bubbles, or arthritis. For tight muscles and tendons, adjustments and stretching may help. Those with arthritis will often need support and therapeutic interventions to calm the pain and increase function.

If you have a cracking joint, speak to your chiropractor. An assessment will likely identify the cause. Then, together, you can decide on the most appropriate treatment. Remember though, most joint noise is harmless.



Is your handbag harming your health?

The bag you casually throw over one shoulder could be hurting your spine, altering your gait, and causing back, neck and shoulder pain.

For many of you this may have been a lifelong habit, and perhaps one that you haven't given much thought to, but it can lead to serious issues for your body.

As fashion collides with convenience, large handbags come ready to carry numerous items, from laptops and phones to cosmetics and drink bottles. Each item adds additional weight, creating imbalance and strain on your body.

When you carry your bag on one side of your body, it immediately creates an imbalance; even a light bag can create a problem. In order to stop the bag from slipping off, one of your shoulders tilts higher than the other one. Over time, this imbalance can create a distortion in your upper back, shoulders and neck, as well as postural alterations throughout your spine. A heavy bag can result in muscle contraction on the side opposite to the bag, and your spine can curve incorrectly to stop you from toppling over.

Choosing a suitable bag is an important first step. Consider switching your handbag for a small backpack, as these evenly distribute the load on both shoulders. There are plenty of chic choices. Opt for equal load distribution, comfortable straps and cushioning between it and your spine.

If you really must have a handbag, carry it in your hand and exchange sides regularly. If, at times you must use your shoulder, try alternating sides. Keep the weight as light as possible and regularly unpack unnecessary items. While it is amazing what you can fit, sometimes it can be months before you realise that you are carrying around half your house in your bag!

It may seem like such a small thing but correcting this habit can help protect your spine and body from unnecessary stress and pain. So, take the challenge and note over the next few days how you are carrying your handbag. You may be surprised! For a start, avoid

hanging it on your shoulder, before too long you will have broken the habit, and be carrying your bag in a healthier way.

Chiropractors play a crucial role with their focus on the health of the spine and correcting postural distortions. They can assess the weight of your bag and evaluate your posture to detect any areas of concern, provide advice, and if necessary, appropriate spinal care.



ACROSS

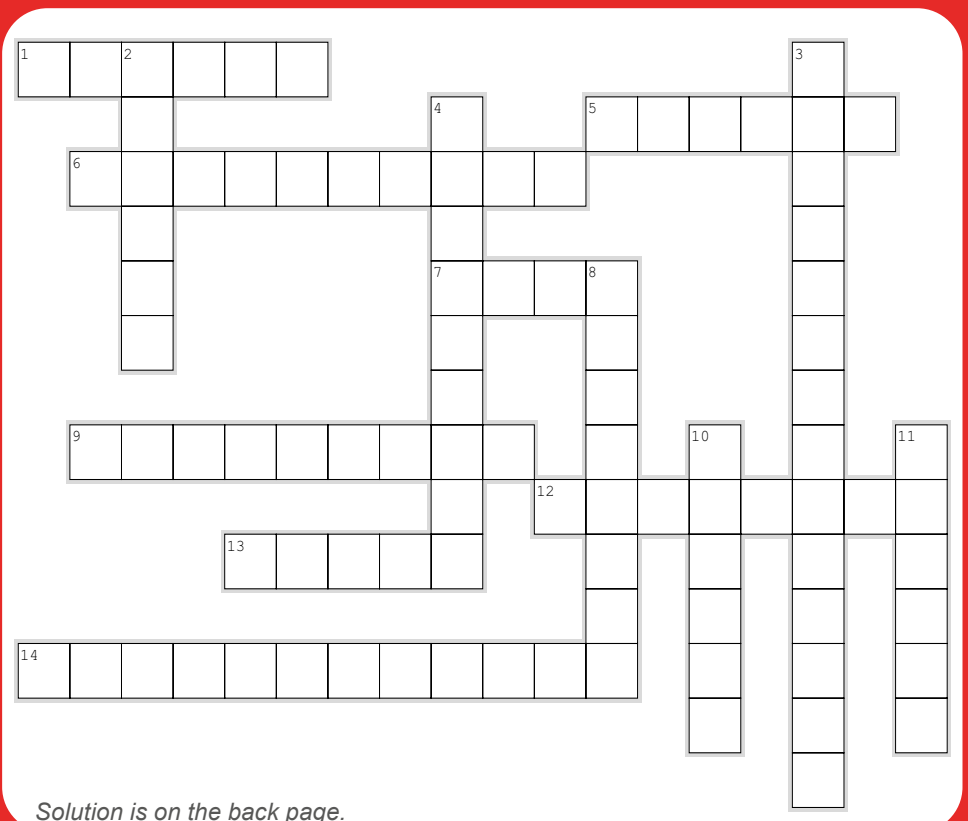
1. Strong tissue that modulates tension and stiffness.
5. A small triangular bone at the base of the spinal column.
6. An essential amino acid found in proteins.
7. Stylish and elegant.
9. Spine.
12. Tough fibrous tissue that connects bones or cartilages at a joint or supports a body part.
13. The joint that connects the leg bones with the highest bone in the foot.
14. Chemical compounds that neutralise harmful free radicals.

DOWN

2. Tension or stress.
3. The movement of a limb beyond its normal range.
4. A food made from cocoa beans.
8. The grating sound heard when damaged ends of a bone rub together.
10. A triangular bone at the base of the spine that joins to a hip bone on each side and forms part of the pelvis.
11. Steady or firm and not liable to move.

CROSSWORD CORNER

Answers to clues can be found in this edition of Your Chiro.



Solution is on the back page.

Dark chocolate, cranberry, hazelnut and cacao bark

This is easy to make, looks elegant, and makes a special gift for any occasion.

Ingredients

280g good quality dark chocolate, chopped
2/3 cup coarsely chopped unsalted roasted hazelnuts
¼ cup coarsely chopped dried cranberries
¼ cup chopped freeze-dried plums or cherries
2 Tbsps pumpkin seeds
1 Tbsp cacao nibs
¼ tsp coarse sea salt (optional)

Instructions

Line an oven tray with baking paper.
Gently melt the chocolate in a large bowl over a pot of boiling water.
Remove from heat and spread evenly and thinly on the tray with a spatula.
Sprinkle over the rest of the ingredients, and leave at room temperature to set.
Break or chop into shards, and store in a sealed container in a cool place.



The chocolate choice

Chocolate: considered a delicacy for thousands of years, it's indulgent, sophisticated, delicious... but is it really good for you?

Chocolate is made from cocoa beans, the seeds from the cacao tree - an evergreen tree native to the tropical area of South America. After harvesting, the beans are fermented, dried, roasted and crushed, resulting in cacao nibs. These nibs are then ground into non-alcoholic liquor ready to be made into chocolate.

Not all chocolate is created equal; to reap the benefits you need to choose the highest quality dark chocolate, raw cacao powder, or cacao nibs, as these products usually have less added sugar and are higher in nutrients.

Generally, the darker the chocolate the higher the cacao (cocoa) content, so choose your chocolate carefully and enjoy:

- **Antioxidants:** those chemical compounds that neutralise harmful free radicals – chemicals that cause damage in the body.

- **Vitamins and minerals:** dark chocolate is rich in iron, selenium, zinc, magnesium, vitamins A, D, E, and a range of the B vitamins. Great for energy and all-round health.
- **Flavonoids:** good for heart and cardiovascular system health, these chemicals help to regulate blood clotting and even lower blood pressure.
- **Good mood chemicals:** chocolate contains tryptophan, phenyl ethylamine and other chemicals which give you that feel-good factor, and even a mild caffeine buzz.
- **Lower cholesterol:** dark chocolate can increase the amount of HDL cholesterol: the good, protective kind, in the blood, which in turn decreases the amount of LDL cholesterol, the kind that causes vessel disease.

Be careful how much you have though, chocolate contains high levels of fats, and usually has added sugar, which makes it high in calories.

If you're looking for a sweet snack, a square or two of carefully chosen quality dark chocolate is a great choice.



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Monday 2:30pm – 6:30pm

Tuesday 7:30am – 11:30am

Thursday 7:30am – 6:30pm

Saturday 7:30am – 11:30am

CROSSWORD SOLUTION
ACROSS 1. FASCIA 5. COCCYX 6. TRYPTOPHAN 7. CHIC 9. VERTEBRAE
12. LIGAMENT 13. ANKLE 14. ANTIOXIDANTS
DOWN 2. STRAIN 3. HYPEREXTENSION 4. CHOCOLATE 8. CREPITUS
10. SACRUM 11. STABLE

Disclaimer: The information provided in this newsletter is for educational purposes only, and is not intended as a substitute for sound health care advice. We are not liable for any adverse effects or consequences resulting from the use of any information, suggestions, or procedures presented. Always consult a qualified health care professional in all matters pertaining to your physical, emotional and mental health.

Take me home to complete our **PUZZLE**