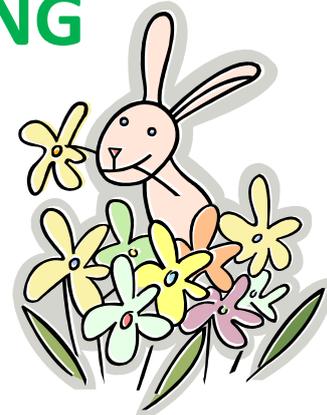


TEN TIPS FOR HEALTHY GARDENING

Gardening can be an excellent form of healthy exercise, but it can also lead to pains and strains if you forget to look after your body while you work. Thanks to the SA branch of the Australian Physiotherapy Association, here's some handy tips to help you avoid gardening injuries.



- Begin your gardening session with a few stretches to warm up the muscles and joints you'll be using. This helps prevent injury and reduces soreness at the end of the day.
- Make sure the area you are working in is free of obstacles such as gardening tools, bags and seedling trays. This helps prevent slips and falls.
- Vary your activities so that you are not in the one posture for more than 30 minutes.
- When doing tasks at ground level, like weeding or planting out, kneel rather than bend from the waist. Where possible keep one hand on the ground for support as you lean forward.
- If your garden beds are wide, step into the bed to work rather than lean in from the edge.
- When shovelling, move your feet to change direction rather than twisting your body.
- Remember the rules for safe lifting:
 - get a firm footing with feet shoulder-width apart
 - bend at the knees and at the hips, using the strong muscles of your legs to lift
 - have a good firm grip on the load
 - keep the load close to your body
 - brace your spine and keep your back straight as possible for the whole lift
 - make all movements smooth and avoid jerking or twisting
- Use a wheelbarrow to transport heavy items, but don't overfill it! Position the weight over the wheel.
- Observe the basic rules for working safely:
 - Ensure heavy equipment or items used often are not stored overhead or below knee level.
 - Work at benches built to waist height. Clear the ground in front so you can stand in close.
 - Keep your equipment in good repair and use tools to suit your own size and strength.
 - Use aids such as wheelbarrows and kneeling mats.
- ***Listen to your body! If it hurts, don't continue the job, and if pain persists see your doctor or physiotherapist!***

