**BACK TO BASICS**

- KEEP ACTIVE!
- Warm up or stretch before exercising or other physical activities.
- NO HIGH HEELS!
- Sleep on a mattress of medium firmness to minimize any curve in your spine.
- Lift with your knees, keep the object close to your body, and do not twist when lifting.
- QUIT SMOKING!
- Strengthen your core abdominal muscles to stabilize your spine.
- Massage, acupuncture or yoga.

**AVOID THESE EXERCISES IF YOU HAVE LOWER BACK PAIN**

- Straight leg sit-ups.
- Bent leg sit-ups or partial sit-ups (curl-ups) when you have acute back pain.
- Lifting both legs while lying on your back (leg lifts).
- Lifting heavy weights above the waist (standing military press or bicep curls).

**REFERENCES**

- The American Chiropractic Association
- Mayo Clinic. 2008 National College Health Association Survey
- Occupational Safety & Health Administration
- WebMd
- Spine Universe
- Consumer Product Safety Commission; Ergonomics Today
- California Chiropractic Association

**TOOLS & RESOURCES**

- Everyday Q&A @ Health Services
- UHS Massage Services
  (208) 426-1459
- thenewmedicine.org
- rec.boisestate.edu
- healthservices.boisestate.edu/backhealth

**ATTACK YOUR BACK...**

**...WITH GOOD POSTURE!**
NOT SO FUN FACTS

An Estimated 31 million Americans will experience back pain at any given time.

Back pain is one of the most common reasons for missed work.

In fact, back pain is the 2nd most common reason for visits to the doctor’s office, outnumbered only by upper-respiratory infections.

Each year, back pain costs Americans about $100 billion in medical bills, disability and lost productivity.

Most cases of back pain are mechanical or non-organic – meaning they are not caused by serious conditions, such as...

- inflammatory arthritis
- infection
- fracture or cancer.

Experts estimate that as much as 60% of the population will experience a back problem at some time in their lives.

You can injure your back by coughing or sneezing.

THERE IS NOTHING GOOD ABOUT BAD POSTURE

With bad posture...

- Your rib cage starts pressing down on the major organs - giving them less space to function.
- Your waistline gains a few inches because of that and you lose a few inches from your height.
- Your stomach will stick out.
- Flexibility is reduced and one shoulder tends to be higher than the other.
- You’ll become injury prone.
- Worst of all, you’ll never feel fresh and rested even after you wake up from a good night’s sleep.

Back pain can form from living an unhealthy lifestyle, bad posture, or even as a result of a disease but if you choose to be more knowledgeable about the subject, you can help reduce the chance of becoming a lifetime victim of back pain.

Back pain can be present anywhere from the lower back to the base of your neck and involve the following inconveniences:

- Muscle ache
- Shooting or stabbing pain
- Pain that radiates down your leg
- Limited flexibility or range of motion of your back
- Inability to stand straight

Acute: pain lasting a few days to a few weeks.
Chronic: pain lasting 3 months or longer.

- Stretch daily and avoid lifting objects over 20% of your body weight to avoid injury.
- Stand up every 20 minutes to prevent harsh pressure and pain on your coccyx.
- Keep your core strong to maintain a healthy back.