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Disability? I'll Just Have to Live With My Back Pain☹

Have you ever heard someone say, "I'll always have back pain," or have you ever felt that way yourself? There is good reason for the average person feeling that way as we age. As joints and discs age, bones become more brittle, and stress continues to cause inflammatory chemicals to "garbage up" our blood stream, there is little wonder why no less an authority than both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United States have proclaimed this the, "Bone and Joint Decade."

Consider that in the U.S. 1 in 3 adults report arthritis or chronic joint symptoms, that 36.9 million Americans incur a musculoskeletal injury every year, that 1 out of every 2 women over 50 will suffer an osteoporosis-related fracture, and that the cost of treating all these musculoskeletal conditions has risen from 254 billion in 2000 to an estimated 1 trillion in 2007, ***more than what we spend for cancer care!***

WHO estimates that musculoskeletal problems are the leading world-wide cause of disability, and that ***low back pain is the leading problem contributing to world wide musculoskeletal disability!***

You may not know that more than 100 professional organizations ***including the American Chiropractic Association*** are founding members of the U.S. Bone and Joint Decade, and are promoting public awareness, patient education, improved diagnosis and treatment, and increased research funding to address these problems.

Ok, so we've established that if you have some chronic back pain you're not alone. But what can we do about it, and is there anything new we need to know?

Actually there is a lot you can do for your chronic back pain related disability!

First, ***see your chiropractor, because there is now more evidence than ever that adjustments provide longer lasting relief and may actually change the course of your back pain and disability!***

In a review published in the January/February 2008 issue of the prestigious ***Spine Journal***, it was reported that scientists found that more frequent adjustments may be necessary early in the treatment of chronic back pain, and that there is limited to moderate evidence that manipulation is better than physical therapy and home exercise, both in the short and long term.

Second, ***if you can't do a lot, better to do a little than nothing at all!*** There is good evidence that increasing your activity levels is good for your back as well as your heart, and that prolonged rest around can actually weaken muscles and bones and increase disability. So if you can't walk for 20 minutes, walk for 5 or 10 several times daily. Get up often, and do what you can to stay active.

Third, ***specific exercise to target the erector muscles of the spine are more helpful*** than other approaches, and may help prevent further episodes of pain. Also, strength training on days you are not walking for activity may be helpful to strengthen bones as well as muscles, and prevent osteoporosis. Your doctor of chiropractic is qualified to give you specific ways to safely strengthen your back and lessen disability.

Is it the case that sometimes we'll just have to live with some back pain? Maybe. But for most of us—unless you're already doing the three items just discussed—there is more to be done to relieve chronic back pain!

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert Leach

DIGITAL FOOT EXAMINATION—During the month of April complimentary digital foot examination will be offered to our patients to assist us in making recommendations regarding foot care. Foot pain and arthritis may be preventing you from walking and activity that can help your back and overall health. Please check with Cathy or Amber to schedule your exam.

BACK SAFETY TALK AT YOUR PLANT—Be sure to tell the personnel director or safety officer at your place of work that Dr. Leach has adapted power point presentations developed by the Chiropractic Unit at the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda, for complimentary presentations on back safety, neck safety, tips on how to live with a bad back, and other similar topics. These can help promote back safety, reduce back-related disability, and help your plant meet its OSHA requirements for 2008. If interested, your personnel director or safety officer may contact Dr. Leach by phone or e-mail.

References:

- 1- For information about the U.S. Bone and Joint Decade visit:
<http://www.usbjd.org/index.cfm?pg=nutshell.cfm>
- 2- For information about the Bone and Joint Decade world wide:
<http://www.boneandjointdecade.org/>
- 3- For information about chiropractic for chronic low back pain:

If you are viewing a paper or hotmail copy of this newsletter, you may view the references associated with the hyperlinks by accessing our newsletters at www.drleach.com, clicking on PLEASE ENJOY DR. LEACH'S LATEST NEWSLETTER, and then "Disability? I'll Just Have to Live With My Back Pain☺"

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