

Family Chiropractic

*Courtesy of Harbourfront Family Chiropractic
by Dr. Warren Gage*



Stress and back pain

We live in very stressful times. A world-wide economic crisis, declining home values, job losses, financial insecurities, an uncertain future... these and other “real life” events cause a lot of people a lot of stress. And that stress is responsible for all types of health problems, including high blood pressure, strokes, insomnia and an increase in the number of people experiencing back and neck pain.

Chronic stress (emotional, physical and chemical) can affect your nervous system’s ability to function correctly, leading to an increased risk for illness and pain. When you are under tremendous stress, your muscles get tense and tighten, especially the muscles in your neck and back.

So what can you do about stress-related back pain?

- Learn how to relax muscles through stretching. Take “stretch” breaks at work, walk around your building during your lunch break. Take a Pilates or Yoga class; implement a stretching routine into your daily schedule at home in the morning or before retiring to bed each night.

- Exercise to release stress and endorphins, those “feel good” brain chemicals – brisk walking, cycling, swimming – anything that increases your heart rate and gets you moving is beneficial. It doesn’t have to be complicated, just move!

- Eat healthy meals – avoid empty calories, sugary snacks and comfort foods that pack on the weight and offer little in terms of nutrition.

- Write down your thoughts or talk to a professional counselor – getting the feelings out on paper or in person helps to relieve pent up emotions which contribute to stress.

- Treat yourself to a massage to ease tense muscles – Salmon Arm is full of great massage therapists.

- Learn to say “no” to anything that will further complicate your life, causing additional stress. Being able to say no on occasion; without guilt, is one of the secrets to longevity.

- Get plenty of rest – it’s hard to deal with the stress that causes chronic back pain when you’re not well rested.

And by all means, make sure you’re staying up to date with your chiropractic adjustments. Chiropractic care helps to “reset” the nervous system so you are better able to fight the negative effects of stress. We certainly see an increase in stress-related back pain as a result of these uncertain times. We want to help you feel healthy and pain free so you can deal with whatever comes your way.