

PhysioBiz

Health newflashes

for bodies busy moving, working, playing, being.



Four things you shouldn't do – for your own good health

It's Healthy Lifestyle Month, and we want you to be healthy.

Welcome to PhysioBiz, with healthcare advice and information you can trust and rely on, brought to you by the South African Society of Physiotherapy!

Here are a few things your physiotherapist really, really wants you NOT to do – for your own good health.

- Put up with pain and delay seeking help.
If you have anything that affects your enjoyment of life, sport or work, such as a painful, stiff shoulder, a sharp pain in your knee, a deep ache in your lower back, or neck muscles that trigger headaches, please DON'T delay seeing your physiotherapist. "Chances are that healing will be a quicker process if you seek help sooner," says South African Society of Physiotherapy President Rogier van Bever Donker.
Remember, physiotherapists are first-line practitioners; you don't have to get a referral from a doctor, you can make an appointment directly with the physiotherapist.
- Stop moving and rest when you have back pain
Of course you don't want to push yourself, and you should avoid doing heavy manual labour or over-taxing yourself if you have moderate back pain. But please DON'T think bed-rest is the answer – it could make your pain worse. Keep mobile, don't sit at work or home for more than 20 minutes at a stretch, use bean-bag warmers (sold at most pharmacies) to keep muscles from stiffening, and see your physio as soon as possible.

- Skip your home exercises

When you consult a physiotherapist for a pain problem that is affecting function, she or he will likely suggest a programme of home exercises, often quite small movements designed to strengthened essential core muscles or maintain improvements achieved during treatment. These exercises are essential to success – please DON'T skip them! Follow the programme and you'll be amazed at how much better you feel.

- Be a couch potato

The human body wants to move; it needs to move. “Your lymphatic system – crucial to immune function and general health – has no pump,” says van Bever Donker. “It’s the movement of your muscles that keeps the lymph moving, so people simply have to move.”

So DON'T become an immovable object, glued to a screen, slouched on a sofa – for your own good health and longevity, move. Walk, dance, play, clean house or, to quote Freddy Mercury, “Get on your bikes and ride!”

To find a physiotherapist near you, go to www.saphysio.co.za