

**FREE!!**  
PLEASE TAKE ONE



**MAY / JUNE 2016**

## GM SPINAL CLINIC

Suite 1  
40-42 Montgomery Street  
Kogarah, NSW 2217  
**P:** 9587 7999  
**F:** 9587 2519

**CHIROPRACTORS**  
**George Kategiannis**  
*B.Sc M.Chiropractic*

**Michael Theodosiou**  
*B.Sc (Hons) M.Chiropractic*

**CLINIC HOURS**  
**Monday to Friday** 8.00am–7.00pm  
**Saturday** By appointment

Your health is our concern but your responsibility. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please let the clinic know as soon as possible, and be sure to make up your missed appointment.



**Members:**  
**Chiropractor's Association of Australia**

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SHOES

Heels are getting higher and flip-flops are slapping sidewalks everywhere during the warmer months.

Have you ever wondered if your shoes are creating a problem for your back or hips? Your shoes support your entire body as the only contact between you and the ground. What you wear on your feet has a huge influence on your posture and some of the worst shoes for your feet are also likely to cause problems for your spine and pelvis.

Footwear can have a much larger impact on back health than most people realise. This is particularly true for people who must stand for long periods of time on a regular basis because of the work they do. But even a short amount of time in the wrong shoes can cause stress to your vertebrae and the soft tissues that support them. Back pain that begins mysteriously can sometimes be traced back to the purchase of new shoes, as the body makes a significant number of subtle movements to try to stabilise itself, with the result being fatigue of the back muscles and discomfort.

High-heels are the obvious culprit when it comes to poor shoe choice for the feet and back. The perfect, pointy pair of 4-inch heels can make any outfit, but with this style comes much suffering. Heels pose a risk of falls, ankle sprains, degeneration of the joints in the feet and problems with abnormal posture. Switching to flatter or lower heeled shoes (less than two inches high) is the best option.

Flats and flip-flops however, can be as bad as high-heels for back problems and

unsupportive ballet pumps that provide no structure or cushioning for the foot are a popular, yet poor choice. Your gait can become dysfunctional with these kinds of shoes also leading to problems in the knees, hips and the spine, as well as joint and soft tissue issues in the feet. Where possible, opt for sneakers or shoes that offer good support for your arches and which absorb shocks to take some pressure off your spine.

Another less obvious problem is wearing worn-out shoes or shoes that don't fit properly. Shoes are supposed to provide support to your feet and worn out shoes will not only fail to do this, but continuing to wear them may actually create problems. It is also important to keep an eye on the soles of your shoes to ensure they are not wearing unevenly, as this could indicate an underlying problem with your feet or spine. Make sure you never wear shoes that are too big or too small, as this will have a significant impact on both your gait and posture, causing you to have to alter the way you walk and stand.

By providing comfort, stability and proper posture, your shoes are the foundation for the rest of your body. While it's okay to wear less than ideal footwear on the odd occasion, make sure it doesn't become a habit and create a problem. Prevention is key!



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## GET UP AND GET GOING

“What’s the best time of the day to exercise?” is a constantly asked question. But the real question should be “what’s the best time for me?”

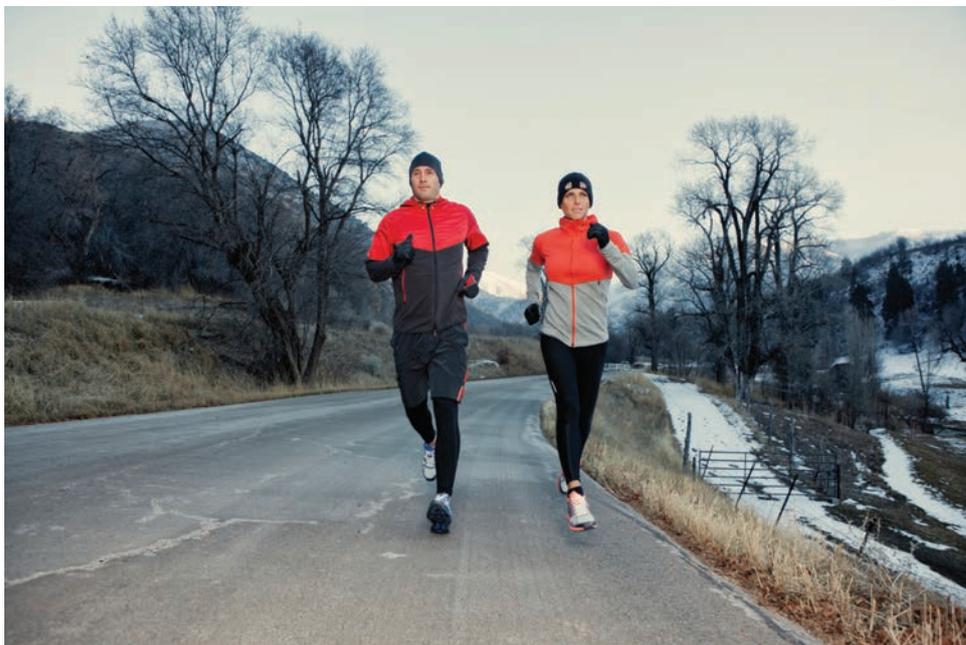
While some people are up at the crack of dawn to lace up their running shoes, others can’t fathom a workout before noon. Finding the perfect time to exercise is as much about personal preference as it is physiology.

Often however, it’s easier to keep a morning exercise routine consistent. Many also find that the energy gained from an early workout sets them up for the rest of the day. Afternoon and evening sessions tend to be

deferred due to other commitments as the day progresses. Plus, a busy day at work can have a serious impact on willpower and overcome even the best of intentions!

Regardless, the most important thing is to create a practical and consistent workout schedule that works, no matter what the time. If exercising in the morning is best for you, just be sure to warm up well first. If you prefer afternoon workouts but struggle to keep them regular, schedule them in your calendar as committed appointments or find a workout partner to keep you accountable.

Exercise is supposed to be enjoyable so do what works best for you. It doesn’t matter when, it just matters that it happens!



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## CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND PELVIC FLOOR CONTROL

There is new ground breaking research that all women need to know about.

Chiropractic care can have an impact on pelvic floor muscles! This amazing new research discovered that pregnant women who received chiropractic care had a greater ability to relax their pelvic floor muscles at rest<sup>1</sup>. This relaxation of the pelvic floor muscles may mean that chiropractic care could be of benefit to pregnant women, as it may help them have a natural delivery - which is better for both mum and baby.

Pelvic floor muscles are the layer of muscles that support the pelvic organs and span the bottom of the pelvis. The pelvic floor muscles stretch like a muscular trampoline from the tailbone (coccyx) to the pubic bone (front to back) and from one sitting bone to the other sitting bone (side to side). These muscles are normally firm and thick and provide support to the organs that lie on them.

Your pelvic floor muscles are integral to the birth process, and to the prevention of incontinence and other issues, which makes this an exciting piece of knowledge for chiropractors and for women receiving chiropractic care. Chiropractic care may actually enhance your chances of having a natural, complication free childbirth!

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<sup>1</sup> Pelvic floor functional changes with spinal manipulation in pregnant and non-pregnant women: A pilot study. JMPT 2016. In Press.

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## TIME TO REST

Sleep is essential for a person’s health and wellbeing.

Yet millions of people do not get enough sleep and many suffer with difficulty either falling or staying asleep.

If you want to be truly healthy, allowing your body to repair after a long day of breaking down, it’s vital you get quality rest. Sleep makes you feel better, but its importance goes way beyond just boosting your mood or banishing black circles. Adequate sleep is a key part of a healthy lifestyle and can benefit your heart, weight, mind and more.

Everyone’s individual sleep needs vary. In general, most healthy adults are built for 16 hours of wakefulness and need an average of eight hours of sleep a night. However, some individuals are able to function without sleepiness or drowsiness after as little as six hours of sleep. Others can’t perform at their peak unless they’ve slept for ten hours! And, contrary to common myth, the need for sleep doesn’t decline with age but the ability to sleep for six to eight hours at one time may be reduced<sup>1</sup>.

Here are some suggested techniques to help combat common sleep problems:

- Keep a regular sleep/wake schedule.
- Don’t drink or eat caffeine four to six hours before bed and minimise daytime use.
- Avoid alcohol and heavy meals before sleep.
- Get regular exercise.
- Minimise noise, light and excessive hot and cold temperatures where you sleep.
- Avoid watching TV or using your phone or computer at least one hour before bed.
- Develop a regular bed time and go to bed at the same time each night.
- Try to wake without an alarm clock but if you do use one, avoid hitting the snooze button.
- Attempt to go to bed earlier every night for a certain period; this will ensure that you’re getting enough sleep.

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<sup>1</sup> Van Dongen & Dinges, *Principles & Practice of Sleep Medicine*, 2000.

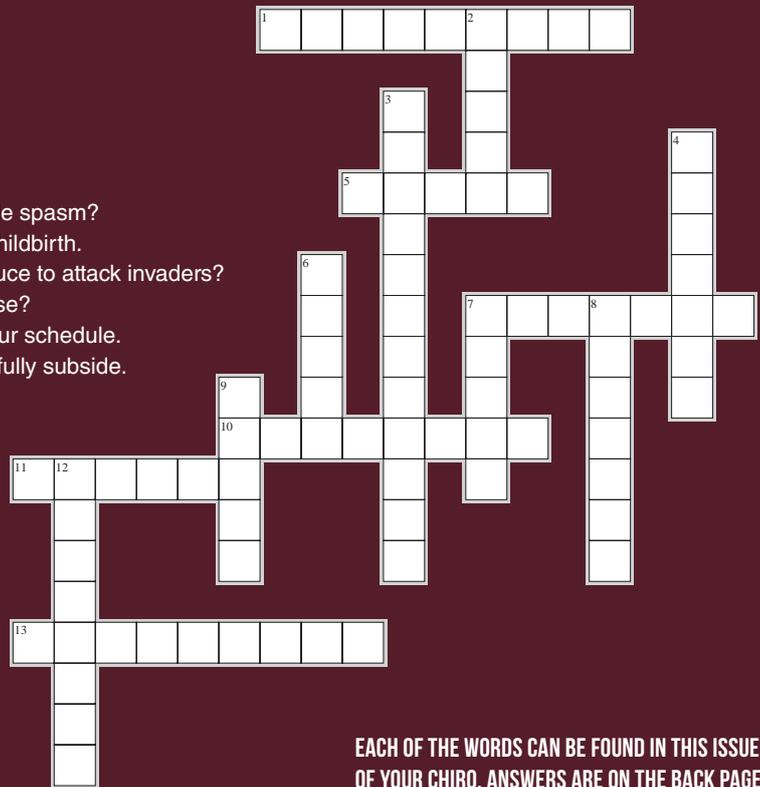
# Clever CROSSWORD

## Down

2. Pelvic floor muscles are integral to what process?
3. What sort of care can help alleviate the cause of a muscle spasm?
4. Chiropractic care may enhance chances of this type of childbirth.
6. What type of blood cells does your immune system produce to attack invaders?
7. What can overextending an already strained muscle cause?
8. Find one of these for your workout to help you stick to your schedule.
9. It can take several of these for a nasty muscle spasm to fully subside.
12. How many people don't get enough sleep?

## Across

1. Stress to this can be caused by wearing the wrong shoes.
5. Most healthy adults need how many hours sleep, on average?
7. Ballet pumps provide none of this for your foot arches.
10. Find the right time for you to do this.
11. Your body's internal defence mechanism is the "what" system?
13. To minimise problems with your feet and back, these are a poor shoe choice.



EACH OF THE WORDS CAN BE FOUND IN THIS ISSUE OF YOUR CHIRO. ANSWERS ARE ON THE BACK PAGE.

## YOUR AMAZING IMMUNE SYSTEM

AAAACHHOOO!! The person sitting next to you on the bus has a terrible cold and he sneezes right on top of you without covering his mouth.

Not only is this gross, it sprays millions of cold viruses into the air around you. Luckily, you don't get sick...but why is that?

Your body has an amazing internal defence mechanism called the immune system. This system is an intricate network of cells, tissues and organs that band together to defend your body against invaders such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungus. A healthy immune system protects us by

first creating a barrier (eg. skin, mucous membranes etc) that stops those invaders from entering the body. Should one get past, the immune system produces white blood cells and other chemicals that attack and destroy these foreign substances before they can reproduce. This often produces a visible sign such as inflammation or fever. Failing that, the immune system powers up further to destroy the invaders as they multiply.

A number of factors affect immune system health, with some that you can't control. The very young and the very old are generally more vulnerable, while those having surgery or with open wounds give microbes a chance to sneak in to places they normally can't. Fortunately, there are a number of lifestyle factors that may give

your immune system a boost and provide you with greater resistance.

- Make sure you get enough rest and participate in regular exercise.
- Eat a well-balanced diet high in fruits and vegetables and ensure you have an adequate intake of protein.
- Be careful to manage your stress levels as while short term stress pumps up the immune system, chronic long-term stress drains it.
- Chiropractic care can also assist your body's natural defences by ensuring your immune system is receiving clear and accurate information so that it can act quickly and effectively when necessary.



# WHAT CAUSES MUSCLE SPASMS?

You reach for an item on the top shelf of the pantry and your back wrenches in pain as a muscle goes into spasm. The pain is excruciating and you can barely move. How could something as simple as reaching for a packet of rice produce such pain?

The answer is – it didn't. Reaching simply overextended a muscle that was already strained. This made the muscle stiffen and go into spasm to protect it from any further harm. Muscles can become strained due to repetitive movements or habits such as poor posture, heavy lifting, swinging a golf club or sitting in front of a computer.

Often, when muscles have been strained for some time, all it takes is one sudden movement (like reaching for something) for an already strained muscle to go into spasm. When this happens, all the muscle fibers contract at the same time. Muscle contraction cuts off blood supply, which creates even more muscle pain, causing the muscle to contract even further. This results in an extremely painful state where even the slightest movement is unbearable.

Your back works hard for you. The better you take care of it, the lower your risk for developing back spasms will become. Losing a few kilos if you're overweight will

help relieve the stress on your spine and your joints. Standing up straight and wearing supportive shoes will help provide stability and strength in your lower back. Spending too much time in bed or in a seat can lead to worsening back problems. Regular physical activity like strengthening exercises for your back and abdomen will also help keep you moving and feeling great.

If you do experience a nasty muscle spasm know that it can sometimes take several weeks for it to fully subside, so try the following to help the healing process:

- **Rest** – This means taking it easy and ensuring you don't further load your muscles. However this does not mean lying in bed for 3 days! Prolonged inactivity will stiffen your muscles and likely lead to more pain.
- **Apply ice/heat** – Applying a heating pad to the affected area may bring some relief. Some people find heat is best, some prefer ice, and others find it most helpful to alternate between the two.
- **Hydrate** – Spasms of skeletal muscles are thought to sometimes be due to dehydration and electrolyte abnormalities. Increasing your intake of water as well as magnesium and calcium may help as well.
- **Walk** – Balance out your rest periods by trying to get up and move as much as possible. Try having several short

walks around the house, followed by a day with a longer walk every hour or so. In general, walking is gentle on your back and promotes blood flow, which in turn helps speed up the healing process. Just avoid the hills for now!

- **Seek chiropractic care** – Chiropractic care helps to alleviate the cause of muscle spasm once it is present as well as helping to prevent it from occurring in the first place. Proper nerve function is essential to proper muscle function and a chiropractic adjustment ensures your muscles are receiving clear messages so they can work correctly.

## PRACTICE UPDATE

### ON ARRIVAL AT CLINIC

Please see the receptionist upon arrival. This eliminates the possibility of you being overlooked and enables us to have your information ready.

### APPOINTMENTS

Your appointment schedule is designed specifically to obtain the best possible results. Please be sure to make up any missed appointments.

Should you wish to change an appointment, we would appreciate as much notice as possible so that other patients can be offered your time.

### PHONE CALLS

Chiropractors in this practice may be contacted by phone during office hours. A message will be taken if the Chiropractor is with another patient and your call will be returned when the Chiropractor is available.

### FEEDBACK

We are here to serve you. Please speak to your chiropractor or the staff about any concerns you may have.

We see your constructive comments as helping us to help you and others.

### WAITING TIMES

Despite our best intentions, we sometimes run late! This is because someone has needed unexpected urgent attention.

Be assured that when it comes your turn the chiropractor will not rush to catch up but will give your problem the time it deserves. Thank you for your consideration.

### HEALTHY HINTS

EAT fish twice a week.  
DRINK at least a litre of water a day.  
WALK, swim or cycle for 20 minutes three times a week.

**THEN....** you'll feel better!

