



Safe Gardening and Yard Work

Phoenix

Physical Therapy

With summer fast approaching, it's time to get your yard and garden ready... but is your body ready? If you're like most of us who have spent the winter hibernating on our couches, you may be at risk for injury as you head outside and engage in physical activity.

- Muscle pain
- Back disc bulge
- Back, shoulder, and knee strains
- Shoulder, elbow, and knee tendonitis/bursitis

Ice Advise

- Apply ice for no more than 15 minutes.
- Ice should not be applied to bare skin.
- Always use a protective covering such as a towel between the ice or heat and the skin.

8 quick tips:

1. Warm up by walking and stretching before engaging in strenuous activity – especially your back, shoulders, and leg muscles.
2. Start slow and progress the level of activity – one to two hours at a time.
3. Change positions often. For example, alternate container planting at waist level with ground planting to alleviate pressure on muscles and joints, and reduce overuse.
4. Take breaks to allow your joints to rest – even if you feel great!
5. Drink water, walk and stretch to reduce stress on your joints. Use this time to plan your next task.
6. Use the right tools to reduce risk and strain on body; padded handle tools, non-slip gloves, and kneeling pads
7. If you have an area that appears red, warm, swollen, and/or is painful, ice is often used as part of the initial treatment for sprains and strains, and other minor injuries;
8. Respect the pain. Any persistent pain lasting more than 48 hours should be addressed by your physical therapist or other medical professional.

Don't ignore your body's cries for help. Seek medical attention if pain is severe, interfering with normal daily activities. It's easier and more effective to treat new and recent injuries rather than those lingering for a few months. Know that a Physical Therapist has many techniques to help teach you ways to modify activities with the goal of allowing you to continue enjoying them all summer while reducing your risk of pain