

SPINE PAIN RELIEF TIPS YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT

Only 10 percent of the population doesn't experience back pain of some kind during their lifetimes. That means that at some point, the vast majority of us are going to need the help of someone like Ian Paskowski, DC, medical director of the back pain program at Jordan Hospital.

At a recent community presentation held at Pinehills in Plymouth, Dr. Paskowski helped a crowd of nearly 150 understand the benefits of staying fit and avoiding back injuries. He has appeared on local television shows and generally talks to anyone who will listen. He has good reason. "If 90 percent of us will suffer from spine pain, I clearly have a lot of work to do," he adds.

At Jordan Hospital, Dr. Paskowski leads a multidisciplinary team to evaluate and treat patients who suffer from back pain. The Spine Care Program at Jordan is the only hospital-based program in Massachusetts to receive national recognition and certification from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), an independent health care evaluation group.

"We evaluate back pain problems for each patient and get input from physical and occupational therapists, rheumatologists, neurosurgeons, pain management specialists and chiropractors as needed," says Dr. Paskowski. "With this kind of team effort, every patient is treated with the level of care required to address the issue."

BACK PAIN PREVENTION TIPS

Dr. Paskowski's presentations offer the standard advice of how to bend and lift and use a computer to avoid back injury. But he has a number of recommendations that you might not naturally connect with back health:

- **Don't smoke.** Smokers have decreased ability to heal and tend to be more sedentary, which increases the chance of injury.
- **Stay active.** Doing things you enjoy and staying active makes you happier, and statistics show that happier people perceive less back pain in their lives. Staying active gives you more coping strategies when you have an injury.
- **Stay fit.** Obesity increases the likelihood of back pain as your bones and muscles try to maneuver more weight.

"Nearly everyone experiences back pain at some point in his or her life," confirms Dr. Paskowski. "The trick is to maintain your health so that you can limit the severity and recover from any injuries quickly." He should know—before becoming a chiropractor, Dr. Paskowski played professional hockey for the Washington Capitals. "They called me the turtle because I avoided fights," he laughs. "The only back pain I experienced was from the long bus rides to the away games." ■

Dear Dr. Paskowski,

I want you to know how much you helped me with my back issues. Somehow I was able to overcome my fear of having anyone move and stretch my back. And miraculously you were able to relieve the pain. I don't know how you did it, but you have your own kind of magic. Your magic was twofold: First, you had confidence in your ability to diagnose and heal me, and that was transferred to me. This has never happened before. I was amazed that I let you bend and move my legs in ways I imagined would have caused extreme pain. It didn't. Second, you knew to move me on to the next level with physical therapy. For the first time in two years, I believe that I can participate in my own healing.

Tedda Lindeman,
Plymouth resident



Ian Paskowski, DC, medical director of the back pain program at Jordan Hospital.

With lower back pain being so common, it is great to have a nationally recognized program here in our community. Call Jordan's Spine Care Program for an evaluation to determine the best treatment plan for your condition at 508-830-6991 or visit www.jordanhospital.org/spinecare.

