

Health Notes

Safeguard Your Yard Work

by Craft Chiropractic Associates, PC

Before you rev up the lawnmower or reach for the rake this fall, consider the possible consequences; upper or lower back strain, neck strain and pain in the shoulders.

Just as playing football or golf can injure your body, the twisting, turning, bending and reaching of mowing and raking can also cause injury if it is not prepared.

Like an athlete, if you leap into something without warming up or knowing how to do it, the chances of injury are greater.

For those of you who have chosen not to choose a landscaper (by the way, we have several landscapers who are *Chamber* members and *Wawarsing.Net* advertisers!), following these tips may prevent the needless pain yard work may cause:

➤ Do stretching exercises – without bouncing – spread out over the course of your work. Perform gentle knee-to-chest pulls and trunk rotations. Try side bends with your arms raised high above your head, holding onto your rake. Slightly bend one knee, keeping the other straight and bend laterally towards the side of the bent knee. Do these stretches before, during, and after your yard work.

➤ When it's still warm outside, avoid the heat. If you are a morning person, get the work done before 10 AM; otherwise, do your chores after 6 PM.

➤ Stand as straight as possible and keep your head up as you rake or mow.

➤ When raking, use a "scissors" stance – right foot forward and left foot back for a few minutes, then reverse, putting your left foot forward and right foot back. Raking both right and left-handed will "even out" the stress on your body.

➤ Bend at the knee, not the waist, as you pick up piles of leaves or grass from the grass catcher. Make the piles small to decrease the possibility of back strain.

➤ When mowing, use your whole bodyweight to push the mower rather than just your arms and back.

➤ If your mower has a pull cord, don't twist at the waist or yank the cord. Instead, bend at the knees and pull in one small motion.

➤ Drink lots of water, wear a hat, shoes, and protective glasses. To avoid blisters, try wearing gloves. If your equipment is loud, wear hearing protection. If you have asthma or allergies, wear a mask.

➤ Try ergonomic tools. You know, the ones with the bent handles; they are engineered to protect you, when used properly.

➤ If you feel soreness or stiffness in your back, use ice for 10-minute intervals each hour. If there is no improvement in two or three days, seek assistance from your health professional. ☆

Miss Katie's Kids Korner

Healthy Snacks?

by Katie Taylor

One of the best ways to keep your children's energy level consistent throughout the day is to feed them healthy foods. This is particularly true during the school day.

The *Ellenville Elementary School* day starts at 8:30 AM. If you work, or have older children, your day starts around 6:00; breakfast is around 6:45 and for some of these little ones, lunch doesn't come until 1:00 PM. That's almost six HOURS from breakfast. Because of this, many elementary school classes have a snack time.

What constitutes a healthy snack? First, avoid items high in fat and sugar. With a little creative thinking and a zip lock sandwich bag, the possibilities are limitless. Zip! Baby carrots with a piece of hard cheese; Zip! Half of a sandwich on whole grain bread, Zip! Apple slices with peanut butter, Zip! Whole grain cereal, Zip! Dried fruit with peanuts, Zip!

Homemade trail mix: You don't have to buy the expensive health food store brands; trail mix is very easy to make. Here are some healthy ingredients that you can toss together, as you will: small pretzels, low-sugar cereals, raisins (including the cranberry and grape varieties), dried fruit, peanuts, almonds, walnuts, chocolate chips (in moderation), banana chips, coconut flakes. Experiment. Let the kids choose their own ingredients and make it themselves. Stored in an airtight container, you've got a quick and healthy snack for the week. Zip!

There are plenty of pre-packaged foods that are also healthy: individual fruit cups (read label for sugar content), yogurt (small containers), individual cheese and crackers, plain graham crackers (preferably with peanut butter for protein), granola bars (read labels for sugar content), and microwave popcorn come to mind.

As for drinks, bottled water is better than any pre-packaged fruit drink that contains 5% real fruit juice. If it contains 5% fruit juice, what exactly is the other 95%? Whatever it is, you're better off with plain old H₂O.

One last tip: pack snacks and backpacks the night before so that your morning rush hour is less stressful. And always remember that kids learn by example. Show them the correct way to live a healthy life now and it will last a lifetime.

(Katie Taylor teaches *Kindermusik* at the **Christ Lutheran Church** in Ellenville. Fall *Kindermusik* classes start **Monday, September 15th** with ongoing registration through October. For more information you can contact Miss Katie at **647-7291** or email ktyville@ulster.net.) ☆

**COOMBE,
& BENDER
COMPANY**
Investment Advisors
Philip Coombe III, CFP

P.O. Box 333 • 6872 Route 209
Wawarsing, NY 12489
(914) 647-8993 • Fax (914) 647-7259
(800) 4 COOMBE

 **Need An Electrician?**
Wurtsboro Electric Service
is ready to help you!
Licensed · Insured · Affordable
(845) 888-8000