YOUR CHIROPRACTOR

MAY/JUNE 2025

STAND UP FOR YOUR SPINE

PREVENTING SPORTS INJURIES

ESSENTIAL OMEGAS

YOUR PATH TO RECOVERY

CHIROPRACTIC FIRST

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CHIROPRACTORS

Dr Esyltt Graham

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Paediatric Chiropractor (AICE 2022)

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B.Chiro

OFFICE STAFF

Maggie Sturges (Chiropractic Assistant)

Ruth Kenyon (Chiropractic Assistant)

OFFICE HOURS

Monday	
9:00am–12:30pm	2:30pm–6:30pm
Tuesday	2:30pm–6:30pm
Wednesday	
9:00am–12:30pm	2:30pm–6:00pm
Thursday	
8:15am–12:00pm	2:00pm–6:00pm
Friday	
9:00am–12:00pm	2:00pm–5:00pm

EXTRA OFFICE HOURS

We are opening on Friday afternoons and two **Saturday mornings** a month to make it easy for you to find an appointment time that suits your busy life.

We would love you to share by referring your family and friends.

Why your lower back hurts
– and what you can do about it

Lower back pain is one of the most common complaints people bring to their healthcare providers. But why is this area so vulnerable? The answer lies in its structure, function, and the demands we place on it every day.

Your lower back, or lumbar spine, is responsible for supporting your upper body, bearing weight while allowing movement. It connects your upper and lower body, making it essential for bending, twisting, and lifting. Because it endures constant stress, the risk of strain and injury increases.

The anatomy of your lower back

Your lower back consists of five lumbar vertebrae, the sacrum, coccyx, and nearby pelvic bones, forming a stable yet flexible base. These bones are supported by muscles, ligaments, and fascia.

Nerve roots from the lumbar and sacral spine extend to your legs, hips, pelvis, and feet, allowing sensation and motion. Because spinal discs sit close to these nerves, disc injuries such as herniation can sometimes cause irritation or compression, leading to pain, numbness, or weakness. Sciatica is one example.

Why is the lower back so susceptible to injury?

Several factors can contribute to lower back problems, including:

- Poor posture and lack of regular movement can increase stress on spinal structures.
- Lifting heavy objects incorrectly can strain muscles and joints.
- Insufficient strength in the core and back reduces spinal support, increasing the risk of strain and injury.
- Sudden movements, falls, high-impact activities, and workplace strain can cause muscle or joint damage.
- Over time, natural wear and tear can cause spinal discs to lose hydration and elasticity, reducing their ability to cushion the spine.

How to protect your lower back

Many cases of lower back pain can be managed or prevented with simple strategies:

- Strengthen your core and back – exercises like planks and bridges help support your lower back.
- Use proper lifting techniques – squat down by bending your knees, keep your back straight, hold the object close to your body, and avoid twisting.
- Maintain good posture – keep your spine aligned whether sitting, sleeping, or standing.
- Stay active – low impact activities such as walking, swimming, Pilates and yoga can improve flexibility, core strength, and posture.
- Avoid prolonged sitting – move often and ensure your workstation is ergonomically friendly.
- Stretch regularly – gentle stretches for the lower back, hamstrings, and hip flexors improve flexibility.
- Improve lifestyle – excess weight, smoking, and chronic stress may also contribute to back pain by affecting circulation, muscle function, and inflammation.
- Listen to your body – if you experience discomfort, address it early with movement, rest, or professional advice if needed.

If you have lower back discomfort, we can assess your condition and explore options for a personalised management plan.

Your lower back works hard every day — discover how to keep it strong and pain-free.

Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you

Play smart this winter and prevent sports injuries

Winter sports like AFL, rugby, and netball are popular across Australia during the cooler months. These sports demand agility, strength, and endurance, but they also carry a higher risk of injury. The physical demands can take a toll on your body, but with the right precautions, you can stay in the game.

Four key tips to keep you strong, resilient, and injury-free

1 Follow an injury prevention program

Proper preparation can help reduce the risk of injury in sports. Various structured injury prevention programs are available, and we have highlighted a few below.

Netball: Knee and ankle injuries are common. The KNEE Program for netballers includes exercises designed to lower injury risk. For details visit knee.netball.com.au

Rugby: Concussions, head and facial injuries, and knee injuries are frequent. The Activate Program is designed to help with player welfare and safety. For details visit australia.rugby/participate/coach/coaching-resources/world-rugby-activate

AFL: Lower limb injuries such as hamstring strains are common. The Footy First exercise training program has been developed to reduce the risk of these injuries in football.

Women's AFL players have a higher incidence of knee, lower limb, and head injuries than men's AFL players. The Prep-to-Play program offers valuable guidance and exercises to enhance safety. Find resources at play.afl/coach/resources/prep-play

2 Perfect your technique

Using poor technique can increase your chance of injury. Whether it's a poorly executed tackle in rugby, an awkward landing in netball, or overextending during a kick in AFL, refining your technique can help reduce strain on your body. Coaches and trainers are great resources for improving your form.

3 Address minor injuries early

It's common for athletes to push through pain, but even minor injuries can escalate if left untreated. A previous injury increases the risk of further damage. Seeking early care helps ensure a smoother recovery and can prevent long-term complications.

4 Manage fatigue and recovery

Fatigue slows reaction times, reduces coordination, and affects muscle control, making you more prone to mistakes and injuries. Prioritising recovery can help maintain performance:

- Get adequate rest between training sessions.
- Eat a balanced diet and stay hydrated.
- Listen to your body – don't ignore signs of strain or exhaustion.

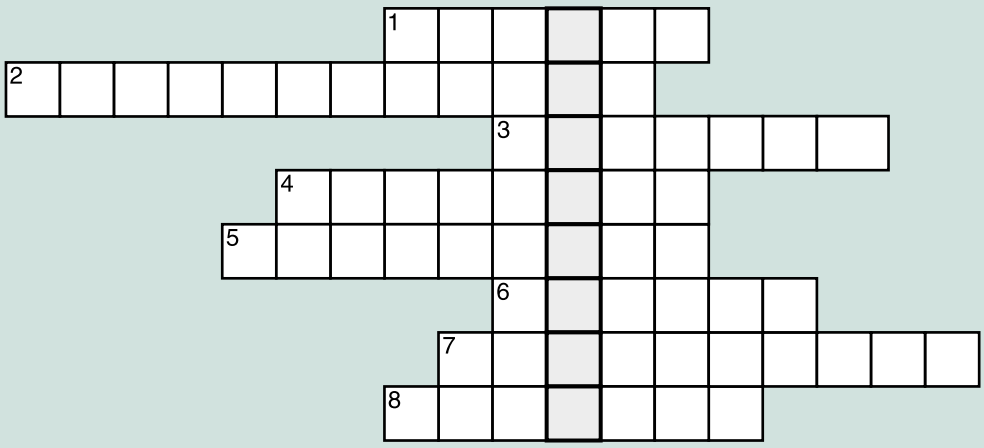
Winter sports can be demanding, but with the right preparation and care, you can reduce the risk of injury and continue to enjoy the game. If you experience discomfort or stiffness, a chiropractor can assess your condition and provide strategies to support mobility and recovery.

SOLVE THE PUZZLE AND FIND A HEALTHY HABIT!

Fill the answers of the clues in the puzzle. Once you've done this, you will find the hidden word in the bold rectangles. Here's a clue for the hidden word: it's great for your health if you do this every day! Good Luck!

THE CLUES:

1. A large fish that is commonly used for food and is high in omega-3.
2. A condition in which a part of your body becomes red, swollen, and painful.
3. A large fruit with dark green skin, smooth light green flesh, which is high in omega-9.
4. A tough piece of tissue in your body that holds bones together or keeps an organ in place.
5. Designing and arranging things so that people can use them easily and safely.
6. A tough piece of tissue in your body that connects a muscle to a bone.
7. An injury to the brain that is caused by hitting the head very hard.
8. The scientific discipline that investigates the structure of the body.



The hidden word is: _____

Answers can be found on the back page

The three 'omegas': how they support your health

Fats often get a bad reputation, but some are essential for good health. Omega fatty acids are a type of healthy fat that supports brain function, heart health, and more. While your body can make some types of fat, others must come from your diet.

There are three main omega fatty acids – omega-3, omega-6, and omega-9. They're all unsaturated fats, which are generally beneficial for health. In contrast, saturated fats – found in animal products and processed foods – can contribute to heart disease, inflammation, and joint problems when consumed in excess.

Omega-3 is vital for brain development, heart health, and bone and joint health. It may also slow memory decline in dementia and support mental well-being.

Since your body can't produce omega-3, it must come from food. However, most people following a Western diet don't get enough. It's especially important during pregnancy for a baby's brain development.

Omega-6 must also come from food; however, it's already high in most Western diets. Maintaining a balanced ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 is important, as too much omega-6 may contribute to inflammation. Omega-6 is found in most oils, meats, dairy products, eggs, cereals, and processed foods.

Omega-9 is a type of unsaturated fat that your body can produce. It's also found in many foods, particularly olive oil, avocados, nuts, and seeds. It's generally beneficial for heart health.

Best sources of omega-3

As omega-6 and -9 are already abundant in most diets, focusing on adequate omega-3 intake is important. The best sources are oily fish like mackerel, tuna, sardines, and salmon. Plant-based options such as flaxseeds, chia seeds, and walnuts also contain omega-3, but your body needs to convert them into a more useful form, making fish the better source.

What about supplements?

Omega-3 supplements may be helpful for people who don't eat fish, are pregnant, or have inflammatory conditions. However, they should be high-quality and taken alongside a balanced diet, as whole foods provide additional nutrients that supplements cannot replace.

The Australian heart foundation recommends eating at least 2-3 servings of oily fish per week, along with some plant-sourced omega-3 each day. This supports heart health and provides essential nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins A, B, and D, and lean protein.

What to expect from your chiropractic treatment plan

If you're in pain, you likely want quick relief. However, while a single adjustment may offer temporary comfort, improving spinal function takes time. Just like building fitness, lasting changes don't happen overnight. Each consultation supports long-term spinal mobility and function, with many patients noticing improvements over time.

Why consistency matters

Many people assume that pain is the first sign of a spinal issue, but that's not always the case. Research shows that spinal changes, such as disc degeneration, can occur without noticeable symptoms.

Pain is often one of the last symptoms to appear and may be one of the first to improve. However, reducing pain doesn't always mean underlying factors have resolved. A structured treatment plan allows time for your body to adapt, and care to recover properly.

When can you expect to feel better?

Every person responds differently to care, depending on factors such as their condition, age, activity level, posture, and lifestyle habits, but here's a general timeline of what to expect:

- First few visits – some people notice immediate relief, while others experience gradual changes.
- First few weeks – regular care may support joint mobility and function. Symptoms may fluctuate before stabilising.
- Ongoing care – with continued treatment, many people experience longer periods of comfort and improved movement.

Your initial treatment plan may include more frequent visits, particularly for chronic issues. While everyone's needs are different, following your recommended care plan can help you get the best results.

What about post-treatment soreness?

After an adjustment, some people experience mild soreness, similar to what you might feel after exercise. Staying hydrated, applying heat or ice, and keeping your body moving with light stretching or short walks may help ease any temporary discomfort.

Why continue treatment if you feel better?

Chiropractic care aims to improve spinal mobility and function. Even after symptoms improve, regular visits can help maintain progress and prevent discomfort from returning, supporting long-term spinal health.

Have questions? We're happy to help!

Following your recommended care plan can help you achieve the best results.

The three omegas winter salad

This salad is rich in omega-3, -6 and -9, offering a nourishing and filling winter meal or portable lunch.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 can of wild-caught salmon (drained) or cooked fresh salmon
- 1 cup of cooked quinoa
- ½ cup of baby spinach
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juicez

Optional:

- 1 avocado (sliced)
- 2 hard-boiled eggs (sliced)
- 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds (or sunflower or flax seeds)

INSTRUCTIONS

In a bowl, combine quinoa, spinach, avocado, seeds, and boiled eggs.

Add salmon and gently toss to combine.

Mix olive oil and lemon juice together and drizzle over the salad.

Serve immediately or refrigerate for later.

Tip: Add avocado just before serving to keep it fresh and green.

Standing desks:
Are they really better for your spine?

Standing desks gained popularity as an alternative to prolonged sitting, with claims they may help with posture and back discomfort. But are they really beneficial?

What is a standing desk?

A standing desk allows you to work while standing. It can be fixed-height or adjustable. Adjustable desks offer flexibility to switch between sitting and standing. Sit-stand stools or anti-fatigue mats may improve comfort.

What's wrong with sitting?

Prolonged sitting, especially when slouched, can lead to back and neck pain, and poor posture. It flattens the natural curve of your lower back, increasing pressure on your spine. This extra load on ligaments, discs, and muscles can cause discomfort and pain.

Sitting for long periods can also lead to an exaggerated forward head posture. This places added strain on your spine, affecting muscles, ligaments, and tendons. Over time, this pressure may lead to postural changes and neck issues.

Potential benefits of standing desks

A standing desk may help counteract some of these negative effects:

- Reduces sitting time – alternating between sitting, standing, and taking breaks may help reduce spinal strain.
- Encourages spinal alignment – a correctly adjusted standing desk promotes better posture and reduces slumping and forward head positioning.
- Engages core and muscles – standing activates core and stabilising muscles. Regular small movements, like shifting weight, may help reduce discomfort and improve alertness.
- Ease back and neck issues – less discomfort may be experienced, likely due to reduced spinal pressure and improved posture from standing.

Limitations of standing desks

Prolonged standing can have drawbacks:

- Just like prolonged sitting, prolonged standing can lead to lower back and neck pain.
- Desks that are too high or low, or not set up correctly can cause musculoskeletal strain.
- Standing for extended periods may cause foot, knee and leg discomfort, though supportive footwear or anti-fatigue mats may help.
- It's not a magic cure – a standing desk is not a substitute for regular movement and general spinal care.

Good spinal health goes beyond just standing. Regular movement, stretching, exercise, posture awareness, and taking breaks all play a key role. If you're looking to improve your workstation setup, we can provide personalised guidance to suit your needs.

APPOINTMENT REMINDER

Your next appointment is on _____ at _____

Date Time

Crossword answers

1. Salmon
2. Inflammation
3. Avocado
4. Ligament
5. Ergonomic
6. Tendon
7. Concussion
8. Anatomy

Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you

PRACTICE UPDATE

We all know we can't stop (or even slow) the march of time, and the inevitable changes it brings. I find it helpful to think about the seasons – natures seasons and life's seasons. Each has its own beauty, each brings benefits and challenges.

Here it feels like we've had 4 seasons in little over 3 months. We knew Lynda left big shoes to fill when she retired however we didn't anticipate just how difficult it would be to find a new team member. Thank you for your patience and kindness while we've been navigating a recruitment pathway that has had more detours than anticipated.

And special thanks to Maggie who has remained unflappable throughout this process. For now, we're trialling a 'third alternative' that sees Dr Aleta and vivacious Ruth covering some CA shifts, along with our stalwart, Maggie.

To all of you who supported me and asked about my time volunteering in India. It was profound. I felt humbled by the hearty welcomes we received from people who have little material goods, yet they love their families and just like you and me, they long for health and happiness.

You can read more about my experience here:

www.chiropracticfirst.com.au/blog-newsletter/blog/hands-on-india-2025

At the end of February our team did a fabulous workshop with Sharon Hinchliffe

arlidesign.com.au

With her encouragement and expert teaching, we had loads of laughs painting pots for plants. I am always in awe of how each person creates a unique outcome using the same basic materials and concepts. A powerful reminder that we each have unique life experiences and health expressions.

As the winter weather season approaches remember to keep moving, enjoy cosy fireside evenings to legitimately hibernate and that your Chiropractic adjustments support your immune system.