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Bionomic™ Injury Prevention Tips For You and Your Employees

You just arrived home from a day at work. As you get out of your car and make your way into your home, how do you feel? Does your energy level match that of your waiting family? Are you eager to begin your life after work? Or do you feel a tad used up? Do you feel any discomfort in your low back? How about a dull headache? Are your neck or shoulders taut with tension?



Do you feel less enthusiastic about life in general than you did only a few short years ago? Yes we are "maturing" but these symptoms are not necessarily symptoms of aging. They may just be manifestations of physical stress and something that YOU can control. Physical discomfort can sneak up on us to deteriorate our quality of life and can, slowly over time, influence a transition from being fully immersed in life's activities to becoming less active in life's many choices.

Well in my kids' parlance, that sucks! I just had another birthday and I have way too much to do to have my body and mind tell me that I can't!

Several years ago I was fortunate to learn some simple body management principals aimed at protecting musculoskeletal health. Although critically important to one's health, they are mostly basic in nature and apply to every human being. Combining this information with breakthroughs in how to effectively train people (training is only as valuable as it is applied) we came to call this field Bionomics™ (bio = body + nomics = manage). The most amazing thing about this information is that it is widely unknown and should be taught to every man, woman and child on the planet. Wouldn't it be nice to know how to be more in control of how we feel?

In essence, it consists of how to self manage our musculoskeletal comfort related to activities of daily living both at work and in life. For example, I know I can work in my office all day, for days without shoulder, neck, or wrist discomfort. Nor do I have to work through dull headaches.

I can help a friend move his family across town, lift children or shovel snow and feel very confident that I will never suffer a back injury of my own doing. Moreover, when I start to feel discomfort from repetitive activities or sustained postures, I know how to relieve this discomfort so it does not add up over time or become a chronic discomfort. I relish my quality of life too much to allow aches and pains to get in my way.

We are all aging but we can do it on our terms. Life is there to live and we need good health to fully enjoy it. Our quality of life is directly related to how we feel. Is there anything more important?

The following are just a couple of basic tips to put to good use while working, around home and in life to help you to be in more control of your health.

- **DO NOT TWIST YOUR BACK!**
You may wring a towel or if one deserves it, wring someone's neck, *BUT NEVER WRING YOUR DISKS!*
- **HOLD LOAD CLOSE TO YOUR BODY!**
Every inch you hold a load away from your body, you are dramatically increasing the pressure on your disks. (Dirty diapers are excused!)

Note: Most sprain/strains are the result of innocent daily stresses on the body that add up over time. The key is to prevent as many of these daily infractions as possible such as:

Around your Vehicle:

- Avoid twisting your upper torso when getting in and out of your vehicle. When entering, turn sideways, facing away from the car and sit in the seat. Then lift your legs and swing them into the car. You are in essence pivoting on your buttocks. Reverse the procedure upon exiting. There are many options to this but just remember do not twist.
- When taking items out of the trunk, avoid bending over at the waist and reaching with a rounded low back. Make sure the object is as close to you as possible before lifting. When lifting, bend knees as much as possible, bring item close to your body and lift with your legs, keeping your back straight. Do not twist.

The Lawnmower:

- The key here is to avoid twisting by moving your feet so that your belt buckle is always facing the object you are holding, pushing, lifting, etc. When lifting clippings or anything else, do not twist and keep the load as close as possible when lifting and carrying.

The Washer and Dryer:

- Lifting full laundry baskets and wet clothes is a daily activity in many households. Remember, when lifting, position yourself close to the basket, then lift. Make sure you are not bending at the waist by keeping your head in neutral posture (do not look down, look straight ahead). This keeps your butt down and forces you to use your legs and not your back when lifting.
- When taking wet clothes out of the washer make sure you do not twist when putting them in the dryer or in your laundry basket. Just move your feet to face where you are placing your laundry. You will be shocked when you realize how many times you twist without knowing it.

The Vacuum:

- Once again, avoiding twisting your torso as you move the vacuum around and under objects. Bend your knees keeping your back straight as you go under tables and objects. Keep it in front of you, moving your feet with the vacuum rather than "planting" your feet and twisting to move it. Also, avoid over reaching and aggressively reaching or extending your arms out. The closer your arms stay to your body the less stress there is on you.

Getting in and out of bed:

- Here again, the tendency is to twist your torso as you "roll" or pop out of bed. First turn onto your side while bringing your knees up somewhat. Next, push your upper body up into a sitting position. Once upright, wait a few seconds to allow blood flow and blood pressure to stabilize, and rise out of bed.

As you can see, we all do many activities 24/7 that have the potential to place unwanted physical stress on the body at any given moment. Taking some time to learn a few tips like not twisting, keeping your back straight and your arms in close when carrying or lifting, can add years of quality living to your life. Use these daily, whether at home or at work to put you in charge of your health.

As 3rd graders, we never received our manual on how to use our own bodies correctly. It is not too late. Let's live life under our terms. We just need to know how!

Bionomics™ teaches employees how to be more in control of their own health both on and off the job. After training over 1 million employees it is amazing to witness the employee buy-in and willingness to use these principles immediately in their lives. It dramatically reduces worker's comp costs and is an initiative that the employees very much appreciate!

We get tremendous enjoyment by "DOING" things in life. Our activity level is a barometer of how well we are living. Pain and discomfort restrict our abilities to DO and thus to enjoy life's full potential. Bionomics™ can help you and your employees to maintain and protect your quality of life.

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Dennis Downing is the founder and President of Future Industrial Technologies, Inc., a nationwide Industrial Injury Prevention Training Company. It specializes in improving conditions at work and in life by utilizing the proprietary injury prevention programs, and , that have proven to be highly successful at reducing workers comp costs within companies of all sizes and descriptions.

Future Industrial Technologies, Inc.
4930 Cervato Way
Santa Barbara, CA 93111
Call Toll Free: 1 (800) 775-2225
Tel: (805) 967-2485
Fax: (805) 967-2487
Email: info@backsafe.com
<http://www.backsafe.com>