

Walking through winter



What supplements should I take?

A question most of us will ask in deciding which supplements will be the most beneficial. Everyone's needs are different- but according to Back to Health, a website dedicated to wellness, they recommend, "core" supplements that most individuals should include in their daily diet regimen.

- Vitamin D
- Omega 3 Fish Oils
- Multi-Vitamin
- B-Complex
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin E

*Before you decide what to do with supplements, please consult your doctor to determine what's right for you.

Half of Computer Users May Develop **PAIN**

Dr. Kevin Shimizu, DC

In 1997, 92 million Americans used a computer, 40% of all households had a computer, and half the workforce used a computer at work. Dozens of studies have evaluated musculoskeletal symptoms (pain, tingling, numbness, weakness) and disorders of the hands and arms in computer users, yet the long-term effects of numerous hours at the keyboard remain uncertain.

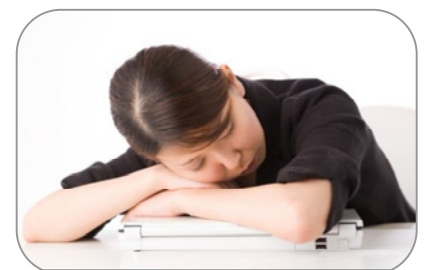
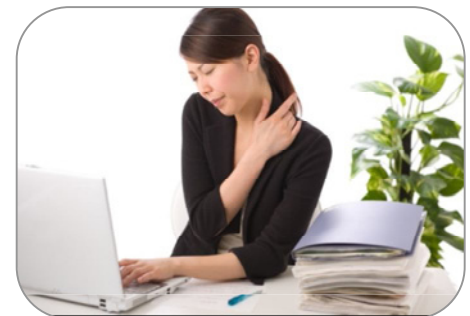
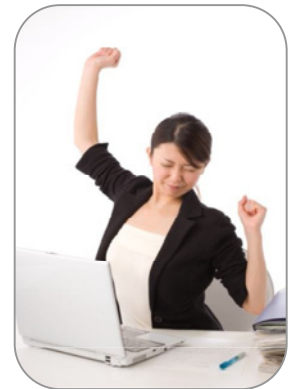
To determine the incidence of conditions developing from workplace computer use, over 600 newly hired employees who used computers at least 15 hours per week were asked to complete diaries on the hours they worked, hours they spent on the computer, and presence of symptoms in their necks, shoulders, hands, and arms for up to three years. Researchers sought those with symptoms requiring medication or scoring high on a pain scale; the results of their study were published recently in the *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*.

Over 50% of the workers suffered from musculoskeletal symptoms in their first year at the new job. Almost one-third suffered a new onset of neck or shoulder symptoms, and a quarter of the individuals suffered new onset of symptoms in the arms or hands. Carpal tunnel syndrome, one of the best-known conditions related to long-term keyboard use, was surprisingly one of the least likely disorders seen in this study - only 1% of the workers developed it. Women and those over the age 30 were most likely to exhibit symptoms from computer use.

If you spend many hours in front of a computer, be sure to use the proper form: Maintain an upright posture, keep your keyboard even with or slightly below elbow level, be sure your mouse and other devices are within easy reach, and get up and walk around regularly to stretch and get the blood flowing to your extremities.

If you suffer from musculoskeletal symptoms, visit your chiropractor for an evaluation. Chiropractic adjustments may provide long-term relief.

Reference: Gerr F, Marcus M, Ensor C, et al. A prospective study of computer users: I. Study design and incidence of musculoskeletal symptoms and disorders. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine* 2002;41(4), pp. 221-235.



Understanding Depression:

Sign, self-care, professional help

Yukiko Matsu-Pissot, MA, LMHC, RCC Registered Clinical Counsellor

It is natural to experience a loss of mood during the dark winter months, but if you have a few of the symptoms described below for more than 2 weeks, you may be experiencing depression.

Signs of depression:

Loss of mood, sadness, despair, hopelessness, insomnia or sleeping too much, loss of appetite or over-eating, difficulty making decisions, lack of concentration, inability to accomplish everyday tasks, feeling tired all the time, lack of interest or enjoyment, irritable, constant negative thoughts, low self-esteem, excessive crying, feeling helpless and hopeless, and suicidal thoughts.

Self-care vs. Professional help

Recovering from depression requires actions. If you find self-care to be too difficult or **if you have thoughts that your life is meaningless and not worth living**, it is a good time to seek professional help.

Self-care tips:

- Get support: talk to someone you trust
- Adjust your lifestyle: regulate sleep, exercise regularly, practice relaxation (yoga, meditation)
- A mood-enhancing diet: eat three meals a day, minimize sugar, alcohol and simple carbohydrate intake, eat complex carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and grains), and take vitamins B and D
- Boost your mood: books & films that uplift your mood or laughter

**Laughter is the medicine for depression*

Resources:

- Self-care Depression Program: UBC www.mheccu.ubc.ca
- CounsellingBC.com: search for counsellors www.counsellingbc.ca
- Crisis Line: 24 hour: 604-872-3311

Piriformis Syndrome = Sciatica?

John Willette, Registered Massage Therapist

Piriformis Syndrome, often mistaken for “**sciatica**”, is a painful condition that results when the *piriformis* muscle compresses the sciatic nerve. This nerve supplies sensory and motor function to the skin and muscles of the back of the thigh and most of the lower leg, and foot.

Because we use the *piriformis* muscle when running and walking, it is highly susceptible to overuse and to the development of muscle tension and trigger-points. Both the nerve and muscle exit the pelvis at the greater sciatic foramen, where the compression can occur. The symptoms of this condition include pain and/or numbness in the back of the thigh, calf, and bottom of the foot.

Therapeutic massage can help alleviate the symptoms of this condition by reducing tension and trigger-points, maintaining or improving ranges-of-motion, and encouraging circulation and general health to the tissues of the affected areas. A normal treatment plan consists of 6-10 hours of in-clinic treatment, spread out over 3-5 weeks, and a self-care program involving daily stretching, hydrotherapy, self-massage, postural awareness, and possible referrals to other health-care professionals.



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Dr. Kevin Shimizu has recently joined the VANOC Anti-Doping team at 2010 Vancouver Olympics.



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