



OUR CENTRE LOCATIONS

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WHO DO YOU KNOW?

We welcome you to pass on a referral and introduce a friend or loved one.

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Dr Melinda Burke

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Port Macquarie Monday–Saturday

Wauchope Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
and Friday

We attempt to cater for same day

appointments, however forward booking

your appointments is always recommended

to avoid disappointment.

YOUR CHIROPRACTOR

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2025



DYNAMIC POSTURE



THE SHOE–SPINE CONNECTION



EATING SMARTER



SPINE-FRIENDLY HOUSEWORK



Guide to strong discs for a healthy spine

Your spinal discs are incredible! Nestled between the vertebrae, these gel-filled cushions allow movement and act as shock absorbers, protecting your bones from impact. They change over time, like any vital tissue. Taking good care of your discs can help your spine stay healthy as you age.

How our discs age

Like our skin, discs lose water content and elasticity with age, which may reduce their height and 'springiness', contributing to wear over time. Surprisingly, discs start getting less blood flow from the early teens!

Genetics do play a role, but daily habits heavily influence the rate and impact of change. Lifestyle is a key factor – obesity, inactivity, poor diet, and smoking included.

Nourish your discs

Spinal discs rely on nutrient transport through the vertebrae. Good blood flow, healthy cartilage and cells are needed for adequate nourishment. Once the vertebral endplates harden, it becomes more difficult for nutrients to reach the discs.

Your body relies on what you eat and drink to maintain healthy tissues, including your spine. Choose a balanced, whole food diet with a variety of colourful vegetables and fruit, lean protein, and healthy fats.

Movement: your spine's best friend

Disc health is supported by gentle, regular movement, rather than intense exercise alone. This pumps nutrients into the disc and waste products out, like a sponge being squeezed and released.

Moderate activity – like walking or swimming – is essential. Conversely, prolonged static postures (sitting or standing for hours) starve discs by halting this nutrient pump. Regular position changes are crucial.

Lifestyle habits that undermine discs

Certain choices may increase stress on your discs:

- Chronic poor posture – like slumping with your head forward – unevenly compresses discs.

- Smoking restricts blood flow to spinal tissues, starving discs of oxygen and the building blocks they need to stay healthy.
- Excess body weight increases the constant compressive load on the lower discs.
- Improper lifting techniques can create sudden, damaging forces.

Disc-friendly exercises

Move regularly with exercises that promote mobility, stability, and controlled loading:

- **Walking:** Aim for brisk 30-minute walks most days.
- **Core stabilisation:** Exercises like planks (modified as needed) and the bird-dog build deep core strength, which helps to protect discs during movement.
- **Controlled loading:** Controlled strength training builds spinal strength and supportive musculature.

Chiropractic care

Disc health isn't about stopping time; it's about how you care for your spine. Simple choices such as: good nutrition, staying hydrated, exercise, good posture, avoiding smoking, and maintaining a healthy weight – can help keep your discs and spine strong, supple, and resilient.

Chiropractors focus on maintaining spinal mobility and function to support healthy movement patterns and reduce strain on the spine. If you'd like guidance on safe exercises or ways to care for your spine, your chiropractor can offer advice tailored to your needs.

Small, consistent habits, combined with professional guidance if needed, can help keep your spine and discs healthy over time.

Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you

From sole to spine: how footwear affects your back



The shoes you wear daily might be quietly straining your spine. Think of your body as a tower: if the foundations aren't well supported, the whole structure may begin to shift. Without cushioning or stability, stress can travel upward, affecting knees, hips, and spinal joints.

Shoes and spine health

- **Flat shoes/sandals:** often provide little to no arch support. Poor arch support—particularly if you have flat or dropped arches—can allow feet to roll inward. This may cause the knees and hips to tilt or twist, placing extra load on the pelvis and natural spinal curves.

- **High heels:** can lead to muscle fatigue and lower back strain. Thin heels like stilettos may also affect balance. Research suggests that heels above approximately 7.5cm are more likely to cause discomfort and postural changes.
- **Open-backed shoes:** may alter gait and cause muscle fatigue from trying to keep them on your feet.

- **Pointy-toed or tight shoes:** compress the feet and restrict natural movement.

These effects often become noticeable after standing or walking for long periods, gradually building up over the day. Over time, they increase stress on spinal joints, muscles, and ligaments, and can

contribute to discomfort in the feet, legs, hips, and lower back.

Protecting your spine from the ground up

You can reduce strain by choosing supportive, well-fitting shoes. Look for:

- adequate arch support
- a stable heel counter
- good cushioning
- a snug (not tight) fit with enough room for your toes to move.

Reserve high heels for special occasions and, when possible, opt for chunkier heels under 7.5cm high.

Alternating between different pairs of supportive shoes can reduce repetitive stress. Retire worn shoes—once the structure or cushioning is gone, support is lost. Orthotics or quality inserts may help improve support.

Spending some time barefoot on soft, natural surfaces such as grass or sand may also help strengthen foot muscles and improve balance safely.

When to seek advice

If discomfort persists or interferes with daily activities, we can assess your gait, posture, and footwear, and suggest strategies that may help support your spine and whole-body movement. Supporting your feet is one step toward keeping your whole body moving well.

Test your health knowledge

See if you can fill in the blanks in the following sentences

1. Foods that break down quickly have a _____ GI, causing a sharp rise in blood sugar.
2. Low GI foods are digested more _____, helping to keep blood sugar levels stable.
3. Flat shoes or sandals often provide little to no _____, which can allow feet to roll inward.
4. High heels above approximately _____ cm are more likely to cause discomfort and postural changes.
5. Dynamic posture relies on three interconnected elements: mobility, stability, and _____.
6. For stability, key muscles need _____ to control joint motion precisely.
7. Spinal discs rely on _____ transport through the vertebrae to stay healthy.
8. Certain lifestyle factors, like _____ and smoking, influence how quickly discs change with age.
9. Repetitive bending, lifting, and awkward positions during activities like spring cleaning can strain _____ and irritate joints.
10. If you experience _____ or intense fatigue, it is a signal to rest and recover.

Hint: Clues can be found in the articles in this newsletter.

Understanding the Glycaemic Index for Smarter Eating

You may have heard of the glycaemic index (GI), but what exactly does it mean and why does it matter?

What is the GI?

Basically, it's a system that ranks carbohydrate-containing foods based on how quickly they break down into sugar and enter the bloodstream to provide energy.

Foods that break down quickly have a high GI, causing a sharp rise in blood sugar. Foods that break down slowly have a low GI, leading to a steadier, more gradual rise.

Pure glucose (sugar) has a GI of 100 and is used as the standard for comparison. Low GI foods fall under 55, medium between 55 and 70, and high GI foods rate above 70.

Why choose low GI?

Low GI foods are digested more slowly, helping to keep blood sugar levels stable, manage weight, and support heart health, while high GI foods are absorbed quickly and can cause spikes and crashes in energy.

Regularly eating high GI foods may contribute to higher blood sugar levels and could increase the risk of long-term health issues such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, chronic inflammation, and challenges with weight management.

What are common low GI foods?

Knowing the GI of your foods can help you make more informed decisions. They include many nutritious options such as:

- Legumes like chickpeas, kidney beans, and black beans.
- Seeds and nuts such as chia, pumpkin, almonds, and walnuts.
- Fresh fruit like apples, oranges, pears, and berries.
- Vegetables including broccoli, cauliflower, peas, and leafy greens.
- Wholegrains such as quinoa, brown rice, and whole wheat pasta.

What about medium and high GI foods?

- Medium GI foods include sweet potatoes, basmati rice, dates, and some breads and pastas. While still nutritious, they may raise your blood sugar a little faster.
- High GI foods include highly processed foods such as cornflakes, rice crackers, soft drinks, biscuits and sweets, as well as some starchy vegetables like certain types of white potatoes.

If you have questions about how your food choices affect your health, feel free to ask us at your next visit.

The GI is a helpful tool that can guide you toward smarter food choices, supporting your overall health.

Spring cleaning without the strain

Spring cleaning offers a seasonal reset, but it can be physically demanding. Repetitive bending, lifting, and awkward positions can strain muscles and irritate joints. However, with sensible preparation and strategies, you can clean your home safely.



How cleaning can challenge your body

Tempted to sweep away the winter blues in one go? Pause first. Lifting heavy loads can strain your back, twisting overhead puts stress on joints, scrubbing floors puts pressure on your knees and lower back, and prolonged overhead work strains your neck and shoulders.

If you already have back pain, your risk increases—proceed with extra caution.

Smart strategies: move well, clean well

Approach cleaning like exercise. Begin with a 5-minute warm-up: gentle torso twists, calf raises, shoulder rolls, and cat-cow stretches prepare your body for work. Then focus on efficient movement:

- **Lift smartly.** Squat and use your legs to lift, keep the load close, and rise slowly. Face the object directly and avoid twisting as you lift.

- **Work in 20-30 minute blocks.** Take regular short breaks to stretch, hydrate, and reset. Pace yourself and avoid rushing.
- **Alternate tasks.** Switch between movements, for example, from overhead work to sweeping.
- **Engage your core.** Keep your abdominal muscles active as you move, but breathe steadily.
- **Choose helpful tools.** A step stool, long-handled mops, lightweight vacuums, and wheeled buckets minimise bending and over reaching.

Listen to your body. Stop if you experience pain, numbness, or intense fatigue—these are signals it's time to rest and recover. Even with good technique, intensive cleaning can leave muscles tight or joints stiff. Simple stretches, rest, and gentle movement afterwards can help ease stiffness and keep you mobile.

Think of your spine like your home's foundation—keep it strong and stable, and it supports your whole body well. Move smart, pace yourself, and you'll finish with both a tidy space and a happy spine!



ENERGY-BOOSTING SALAD

This vibrant salad combines the earthy sweetness of beets with the creamy tang of goat cheese and a citrusy dressing for a perfect balance of flavours. Serve with your choice of lean protein like chicken, salmon, or legumes, and it's the perfect energy booster! For extra iron, pair with quinoa, or roasted lentils or chickpeas.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 small yellow beet, 1 small red beet
- 100g goat cheese, crumbled
- 2 cups mixed greens (e.g., arugula, spinach, or baby greens)
- ¼ cup walnuts
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon fresh orange juice
- 1 teaspoon honey
- Salt and pepper, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Boil the yellow and red beets for about 15-20 minutes or until just tender.
2. Once cooked, drain, let cool, then peel and slice thinly.
3. Orange dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, balsamic vinegar, orange juice, honey, salt, and pepper.
4. In a large bowl, layer the mixed greens, followed by the sliced yellow and red beets, and crumbled goat cheese.
5. Drizzle the orange dressing over the salad and toss gently to coat.
6. Top the salad with toasted walnuts or a seed mix (needed).

What is dynamic posture?

Dynamic posture is how you stabilise yourself during motion. Whether walking, lifting, or reaching, it's your muscles, joints, and nerves working together. Overlook it, and strain can build up.



Why dynamic posture matters

Poor dynamic posture means your body has to work harder. It forces muscles and joints to compensate, which may wear down joints prematurely (like uneven tyre tread), and sap energy. Efficient posture distributes forces evenly, letting you move well and with less effort and potentially fewer injuries.

Spotting everyday movement traps

A range of daily habits can sabotage your dynamic posture, common ones include:

- **Shopping bag lift:** flexing and twisting at the waist when lifting.
- **The walking scroll:** walking with a forward head carriage and rounded shoulders.
- **Toddler tilt:** habitually carrying a child (or heavy object) on one hip.
- **Backpack sling:** carrying a heavy bag or backpack on one shoulder.

- **Steering wheel death grip:** clamping your hands tightly on the wheel, over-tightening the arms and shoulders.

The essential trio

Dynamic posture relies on three interconnected elements: mobility, stability, and body awareness (proprioception). For healthy mobility, the joints must move freely within their range. For stability, key muscles need strength to control joint motion precisely. For proprioception, your brain must sense your body's position in space. When mobility, stability, and body awareness work together, you move more efficiently and confidently.

Quick tips for moving well

When walking, keep your gaze forward and shoulders relaxed. Imagine balancing a book lightly on your head. This simple cue promotes whole-body harmony with each step. If you need to use your phone, consider headphones. Don't walk and scroll!

When lifting, bend at your knees, face the object squarely and rise slowly. This protects your spine from twisting and uneven forces.

Carry your backpack on both shoulders. Consciously practice relaxing when you drive. And while it's often unavoidable, try to alternate hips when carrying your toddler, or use a supportive carrier to reduce strain.

A chiropractor's view of movement

Chiropractors don't just assess static posture. We also observe how your body moves, such as weight shifts, joint coordination, and compensations that may affect comfort or efficiency. Looking at these patterns can provide useful insights into how your body is working day to day, and may help uncover factors linked to pain or discomfort.

If you notice recurring discomfort, uneven movement, or difficulty with certain activities, it may help to have your movement assessed. We can provide strategies to support healthy posture and help keep you moving comfortably.



ON ARRIVAL AT THE PRACTICE

Please see the receptionist upon arrival.

This eliminates the possibility of you being overlooked and enables us to have your information ready.

APPOINTMENTS

Your appointment schedule is designed specifically to obtain the best possible results. Should you wish to change an appointment, we would appreciate as much notice as possible so that other patients can be offered your time.

ONLINE BOOKINGS

We have online booking available. Make your appointment with your favourite chiropractor by booking through

coastlinechiropractic.com.au

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

Prompt payment of your account will help us keep the fees down. However if you are experiencing difficulties with payment at any time please arrange a confidential meeting with our accounts person.

OUR COMMITMENT

This practice is committed to providing the best possible care to all patients. Our staff regularly attend short continuing professional education courses to update their knowledge and techniques.

APPOINTMENT REMINDER

Your next appointment is on _____ at _____
Date Time

Puzzle answers:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. High | 6. Strength |
| 2. Slowly | 7. Nutrient |
| 3. Arch support | 8. Obesity |
| 4. 7.5 | 9. Muscles |
| 5. Body awareness | 10. Pain |

Disclaimer: The information in this newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for professional health advice, diagnosis or treatment. Decisions relating to your health should always be made in consultation with your health care provider. Talk to your chiropractor first.

Our newsletter is free - please take a copy with you