[IMAGE]

Do You Know the Risk Factors for Back Pain?

While the old saying goes that the only two sure things in life are death and taxes, back pain isn't far behind. The National Institutes of Health estimates that between 60 percent and 85 percent of all American adults experience back pain at some point in life, and that between 20 percent and 30 percent of the adult population suffers from back pain at any given time. Unfortunately, it can be quite difficult to predict who will suffer back pain, when it will occur, and what factors are likely to cause the problem.

A recent study examined the records of more than 11,000 Canadian adults who reported no back problems in 1994-1995. At a follow-up interview two years later, the participants were asked whether they had been diagnosed by a health professional with any back problems.

Based on the follow-up interviews, women were slightly more likely (9 percent) than men (8.1 percent) to have suffered back pain in the past two years. In men, the significant factors leading to back pain were age (particularly between ages 45 and 64), height, activity patterns (especially heavy work), a lack of gardening or yard work, and chronic stress. Women who suffered back pain were more likely to be restricted to performing certain activities; have been diagnosed with arthritis or rheumatism; suffer from personal stress; and have a history of psychological trauma that occurred as a child or teenager.

If you fall into one of the risk categories mentioned above, now may be a particularly good time to schedule an appointment with a doctor of chiropractic. Your chiropractor can talk to you about ways to treat and prevent back pain, and provide suggestions that will keep you healthy, active and pain-free.

Reference:

Kopec JA, Sayre EC, Esdaile JM. Predictors of back pain in a general population cohort. *Spine* 2003:29(1), pp. 70-78.

For more information on back pain, go to http://www.chiroweb.com/find/tellmeabout/backpain.html

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