



Derby Fibromyalgia Support Group

NEWSLETTER

Welcome
to our 2nd
AGM
ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING

Articles Inside



Accessible Gardening with Low Back Pain



Computer Use Significantly Affected By Arthritis



Good News About Vitamin D

Message From Jackie



Hi Everyone.

Well, here we are, our second year of the Support Group. Its nice to look back over the last two years and see how things have changed, the numbers of people coming to the group have increased, especially since we started the Saturday meetings this year. I have received lots of feedback, some from phone calls, of some helpful advice given during the meetings from myself, chatting to others or reading information from the selection of books and handouts available at the meetings. It's nice to be able to help others, even with the smallest thing. It all makes a difference! Just being there is all that is needed sometimes. It makes all the hard work, that Doug, Anne, David and I put in to making people feel they are not on their own.

There has recently been a debate at Westminster Hall, Tuesday 5th May, 9.30am. By Mr. Rob Wilson of (Reading, East) (Con). On behalf of FMAUK and APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group), putting long overdue questions to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of state for health (Anne Keen) regarding Fibromyalgia. In brief it was mentioned that there are guidelines needed by NICE. (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, to raise the profile of Fibromyalgia and raise the importance of prompt diagnosis of the condition. Fibromyalgia affects 1 in 50 of the population in the UK. Showing to have more impact on patient's lives than many other widespread pain and chronic conditions.

And so it went on, the rest of the debate can be seen on video on the House of Commons website. <Mhtml://\coruscant\downloads\Anne Docs\House Of Commons Hansard Debates...> If you can access this it is definitely worth a look.

We will do our best to keep you updated on the progress, that's if you don't see it on the news. Watch this space!!!

Just another reminder, there will is a questionnaire available that is being surveyed by the University of Derby Pain Project.

They are conducting the study to see how chronic pain affects our daily lives. They are going to use the study also to find out what treatment we have received or not received and how the treatments affect different people.

I hope you can assist with the survey.

As the Saturday meetings have becoming very popular, just so that you know, members are welcome at both Saturday and Thursday meetings, for those who attend the Thursday meeting and Saturday meeting in the same month there will a reduced charge of £1 for admission to the second meeting. The membership stays the same.

Forthcoming Church Events

SPEAKERS

May			May		
DATE	TIME	SPEAKER	DATE	TIME	SPEAKER
Sun 10 th	6.15pm	Sue Presley	Mon 18 th	2.30pm	Angela Farrel
Mon 11 th	2.30pm	Lynette Foster	Sun 24 th	6.15pm	Pat Collett
Sun 17 th	6.15pm	Lucy Watts	Sun 31 st	6.15pm	John Everill

Special Events

Supper With Spirit

Saturday 16th May

7.00pm



Open Circle

Every 2nd and 4th Thursday
Of Each Month

7.30pm

No Admission After 7.35pm

Healing Services

Thursdays

2.00pm – 6.00pm

Fibromyalgia Awareness Day

Join us at our coffee morning

Tuesday 12th May
11.00am

Derby Garden Centre
Little Eaton
Derby
DE21 5DB

Join Us At Our Next Meetings

Thursday 14 th May 10.15am –12.30pm 2 nd Birthday Meeting	Saturday 6 th June 2.00pm –4.00pm This date has had to be postponed until a later date. We will let you know as soon as we can.	Thursday 11 th June 10.15am –12.30pm Guest Speaker Colin Smith Department of Works and Pensions	Saturday 4 th July 2.00pm –4.00pm
---	--	--	---

Charnwood Spiritualist Church

18 Charnwood Street, Derby

DE1 2GU

Admission

Members £2.50

Non – Members £3.50

Membership £5.00 Per Annum

Free Car Park at Back of Church

Tombola

Refreshments

Friends, Carers

& Family Welcome

Accessible Gardening with Low Back Pain

by **Christina Lasich, MD**
My Garden, and Oh My Aching Back

Monday, April 27, 2009

My gardening hobby was taken away from me at the age of 29. SCHREEEECH! Wait a minute, I don't think so. Getting my hands dirty, watching my plants thrive, and smelling my roses; I cannot give this up. No way! **When my back says no**, I find another way. I have learned to adapt my gardening habits to suit my physical abilities because giving up a pleasurable activity is not an ideal option. Being smarter than my problem is the best option. Here are some ways that I have continued to enjoy my garden.

1. Staging Projects

I used to prune all 25 of my roses in one day. Those days are gone, baby, gone. Now, I stage such big projects over the course of multiple days. On the first day, I might prune five rose bushes; the second day maybe three bushes and so on. By spreading the task out over time, I allow my back to recover. I do not let my back get too overwhelmed. This concept can apply to any chore. Everything gets done eventually. Pacing myself also helps me to avoid fatigue, a low back enemy. When my muscles are tired and fatigued, my movement becomes lazy and sloppy. That's when injuries can occur. Another advantage of staging projects is the ability to vary activities. Doing a small bit of one project and a small bit of another project helps to vary the muscle work. This strategy helps me to avoid repetition and sustained postures, both of which are low back enemies.

2. Proper Design

Getting down to the ground level is getting harder and harder every year. So, I like to raise things to my level (which is rather tall). By using containers and raised beds, I have brought the garden to me. In fact, I have a large picnic table that I place containers on and use to repot plants. Everything is easier for the low back when the hands stay between the shoulders and the waist. Anything that I can do to reduce reaching eases my back pain. I try to plant in clusters to reduce reaching for far away plants. Now, I can place myself in one spot and attend to all the plants in a cluster without overextending myself. By keeping the hands close to the body, the low back pain stays under control. And what about those plants? I look for carefree plants when designing a new area. Less watering, mulching, pruning, spraying, etc, etc... Less work, less pain; that's my motto. I also try to buy the smallest plants because they are easier to handle when planting. They all eventually grow-up if I don't kill them first.

3. A Mechanical Advantage

In physics class (not my favourite subject), I learned that with a long enough handle you can move the world. This concept is called creating a "lever arm". Try using a small trowel to make a hole. Not too easy, right? But use a long handled shovel, that's when the dirt can really start to fly. Long-handled pruner help reduce work load also. What about those long-handled "reachers" or grabbers? Those help me grab things on the ground. Finding the right tool with the right-sized handle really helps to reduce the amount of "muscle" work needed for a project. Less work, less pain means more enjoyment. Every spring, one of my patients comes to me with a pain flare-up after weeding. So, every year, I teach people how to weed using the "Swiss Ball"-the big rubber exercise ball. If the weed must go, find a better way to pull it by supporting the low back. Lying over the ball (belly down) with the knees on the ground is a mechanically better position to do any task at the ground level (I have even painted baseboards in this position. See picture) The weeds don't stand a chance if you are creative and find a better way to do things. Gardening can be accessible if you try to give your back an advantage-a mechanical advantage.

Being Smarter than Your Problem

The world of gardening is open to you and me who have low back pain as long as we stay smarter than our problem. By discovering alternative ways to do things, you can stay within your physical limitations. Freedom *can* be found within boundaries and limitations. Start by finding a sustainable pace and staging projects. This allows things to get done without flare-ups. Proper garden design and plant selection reduce the work load on poor aching backs. And finally, giving low backs a mechanical advantage with the right tools can reduce the risk of more pain. Continuing to find pleasure through gardening can be a reality for those with back pain. In fact, finding pleasure and doing something you enjoy every day, be it gardening, crafting, or another pastime, is a critical aspect to living with a painful condition. Remember, life is short, even on the longest days; so, learn to stop and smell the roses.



Computer Use Significantly Affected By Arthritis

A new study explored this question among people with rheumatoid arthritis (RA), osteoarthritis (OA) and fibromyalgia (FM). The study was published in the May issue of *Arthritis Care & Research*.

02 May 2009

Computers are increasingly used in daily life: 56 percent of workers use one on the job and 62 percent of households own one. Arthritis is a leading cause of work disability, and those with the diseases may have difficulty performing physically demanding jobs, and may select jobs that appear less strenuous but require intensive computer use. Computer use is a risk factor for pain and musculoskeletal disorders in the general population; arthritis patients are more at risk because of difficulties performing tasks due to pain, restricted movement, muscle weakness, or fatigue. Little is known about the magnitude of problems experienced by those with arthritis during computer use, but a new study explored this question among people with rheumatoid arthritis (RA), osteoarthritis (OA) and fibromyalgia (FM). The study was published in the May issue of *Arthritis Care & Research*.

Led by Nancy A. Baker of the University of Pittsburgh and funded by the Western Pennsylvania Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation, the study involved 315 arthritis patients who completed a specially-designed survey that contained questions on computer use, discomfort experienced while using a chair, desk, keyboard, mouse and monitor, and problems associated with each piece of equipment. The results showed that many people with arthritis experience both discomfort and problems that could lead to work limitations: 84 percent of respondents reported a problem with computer use attributed to their underlying disorder and 77 percent reported some discomfort related to computer use. Of the three categories of disease, significantly more respondents with FM reported severe discomfort, more problems and greater limitations related to computer use than those with RA or OA. "Because those with arthritis may experience pain and discomfort even under ideal circumstances, it is not surprising that the prevalence of respondents reporting discomfort with computer use is considerably higher than the general population of computer users," the authors note.

Respondents reported problems with finding a comfortable position while using the computer and in manipulating the keyboard and mouse. It was expected that those with RA and OA would have more problems manipulating the keyboard and mouse than those with FM because of their restricted movements. However, in this study those with FM reported more problems. The authors hypothesized several explanations: People with FM may have increased clumsiness due to abnormalities in sensory processing or fatigue, they have diffuse rather than localized pain that may affect manipulation, or those with movement limitations, such as RA and OA, have found it easier to adapt their environment than those with unpredictable diffuse pain, such as FM.

In recent years, numerous products have been designed to reduce discomfort and problems during computer use, such as adjustable chairs and monitors and adapted keyboards and mice. "Providing people with arthritis with appropriate strategies and equipment to prevent computer problems may significantly reduce work limitations and prevent those with arthritis from discontinuing computer use," the authors state. They add that computer use in the home appears to have a greater potential to place people at risk for upper extremity musculoskeletal disorders, since most people do not set up their home computer environment to reduce risk factors. Those with arthritis should therefore have both their work and home computer set-ups evaluated to ensure that problems are minimized.

The authors point out that the ability to use a computer is one method of preventing work limitations and eventual disability, as well as a vital tool for both work and home activities. They conclude that "health professionals must work with people with arthritis to identify problems experienced during computer use and implement computer workstation modifications to ensure safe, effective, and comfortable use of all computer equipment."

Article: "Problems Experienced by People With Arthritis When Using a Computer," Nancy A. Baker, Joan C. Rogers, Elaine N. Rubinstein, Saralynn H. Allaire, Mary Chester Wasko, *Arthritis & Rheumatism* (Arthritis Care & Research), May 2009.

Source: Sean Wagner and Wiley-Blackwell

Article URL: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/148485.php>

Good News About Vitamin D

By Gale Maleskey, MS, RD
Registered Dietician
April 23, 2009

Getting more than 400 IU of vitamin D — the usual amount in most vitamins — reduces your risk of breaking bones by about 20%, new research has found. Less than 400 IU doesn't have this same protective effect.

Researchers say results might be even better if high-dose vitamin D treatment was used consistently, started at an earlier age (average age in this study: 78) and used D3, not D2, a weaker form of vitamin D found in most multivitamins. They recommend at least 400 IU of vitamin D3 a day for anyone age 65 or older. (Arch Intern Med. 2009;169[6]:551-561.)

Meanwhile, researchers at the Mayo Clinic found that higher blood levels of vitamin D meant less need for pain meds for people with all sorts of chronic pain problems. Low D has been tied to bone and muscle pain, and depressed mood. (Pain Med. 2008 Nov;9(8):979-84.)

Vitamin D inadequacy is more common than previously thought, and has been found in people with osteoporosis, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, depression, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis.

The Anti-Aging Bottom Line: Sub-optimal vitamin D is common, and can cause many health problems. Get at least 1,000 IU a day. Better still, have your blood serum tested for 25-hydroxyvitamin D. The level should be at least 30 ng/ml to be adequate. You may need to take large amounts of vitamin D initially, under medical supervision, to get your blood levels up. Once you've reached a good range, a smaller dose of 1,000 IU a day, may keep you at an optimal level.

Try These

Recipes

Chicken and potato bake

Ingredients

- 2x chicken fillets
- 3x medium sized potatoes
- small tin of chopped tomatoes
- grated cheddar cheese
- mixed herbs

Method

Pre-heat oven to 180C.

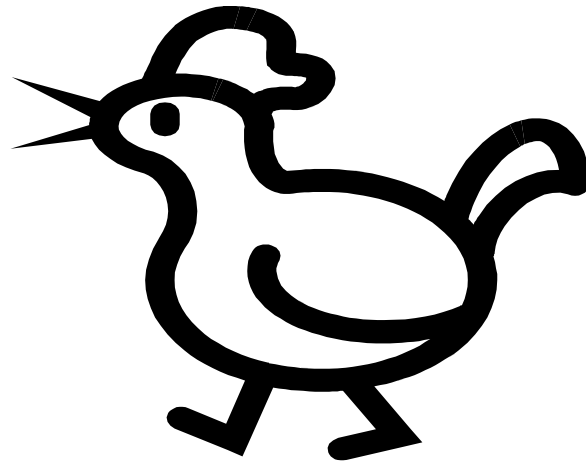
Peel and chop the potatoes into quarters. Place in saucepan of water, and bring to the boil. Then simmer for 30 minutes.

Fry chicken fillets in a little oil until thoroughly cooked. Take off the heat and chop into rough cubes.

When potatoes are nearly cooked, put tin of tomatoes in a saucepan and allow to heat through. Add in the cubed chicken and stir.

When potatoes are cooked, drain chop into cubes and add into the tomatoes. Stir in, and then pour into an ovenproof dish.

Sprinkle over the grated cheese, the mixed herbs and bake for 5-10 mins or until cheese has browned. Serve with salad or cheesy garlic bread.



Chef Lou

2 minute strawberry dessert

Ingredients

- A few strawberries
- Digestives (or any biscuit you like)
- Greek yoghurt

Method

- Crush biscuits
- Put in bottom of glass/small bowl
- Spoon yoghurt on top to cover biscuit
- Add chopped strawberry
- Make another layer on top with biscuit, yoghurt and strawberry again
- Nicest thing you'll ever eat



Chef Zaenab

Puzzles and Jokes

Here's a tricky puzzle for you.

Where has the Pound gone?

Three friends have a meal together and the bill came to £25.

The three friends each pay £10, which the waiter gives to the cashier.

The cashier hands back five £1 coins to the waiter.

The friends cannot split the \$5 three ways so they each have £1 and give the waiter £2 as a tip.

They all paid £10 and got £1 back, $£10 - £1 = £9$

There was three of them $3 \times £9 = £27$

If they paid £27 and the waiter got £2, $£27 + £2 = £29$

Where did the other £1 go? $£30 - £1 = £29$

Solution next month

Funny Book Titles

I Win! by U. Lose

Robots by Anne Droid

Danger! by Luke Out

Cloning by Irma Dubble II

Hot Dog! by Frank Furter

Cry Wolf by Al Armist

Wake Up! by Sal Ammoniac

I'm Fine by Howard Yu

Gambling by Monty Carlos

Hypnotism by N. Tranced

Downpour! by Wayne Dwops

Full Moon by Seymour Buns

Sea Birds by Al Batross

Teach Me! by I. Wanda Know

I Say So! by Frank O. Pinion

Tug of War by Paul Hard

Surprised! by Omar Gosh

Beekeeping by A. P. Arry

Good Works by Ben Evolent

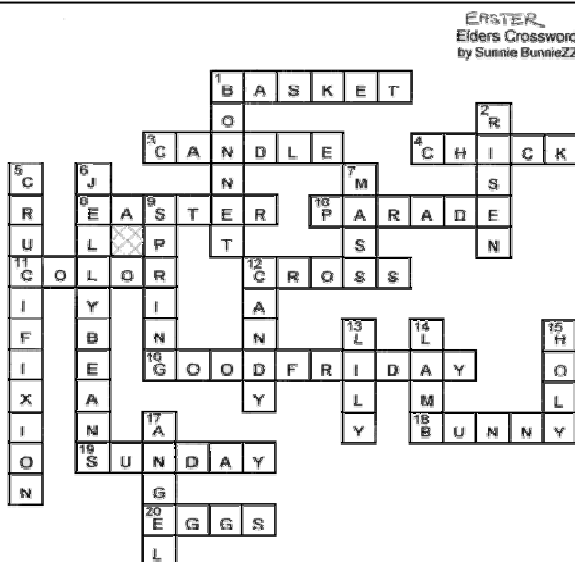
Golly Gosh! by G. Whiz

It's Magic! by Sven Gali

April Fool! by Sue Prize

Come on in! by Doris Open

Last months answers



Kids Bits

Colour this kids

