

# Taking care of your back in the workplaces

DR MD FARUQUL ISLAM

Md Junaid Ahamed (not a real name), 35 years old gentle man works in a private bank for 5 years. For the last 6 months, he has been suffering from severe back pain causing disruption in normal activities at office and home. During the office time, he feels difficulty in sitting for long time, cannot give full concentration on work because of pain in the back that results in extra pressure and depression. There are many officials like Junaid who suffer in many ways; sometimes they need to change their job or the nature of work they are doing.

So, the point is why do the employees suffer from back or spine related problem which may be in early of their career? However, several research have described that the back pain or Low Back Pain (LBP) is a common musculoskeletal complaint in all parts of the world. The most frequently reported risk factor for LBP is heavy physical workload such as lifting, awkward posture; lifestyle is also considered a risk factor of LBP. LBP is the first common cause of activity limitation, second



common cause of doctor's visit and the third common cause of surgical intervention in the USA. **Preventing and managing your back from injuries:**

- First and very important one is educating employees about the risk of back problem during office work.
- Use comfortable posture or position while sitting long time even doing any activities.
- While lifting object from

ground, you should not use your back to bend forward rather use your knee support.

• Sitting has become the most common posture in the workplace; approximately three-quarters of all workers in industrialised countries have jobs that require sitting for long periods.

• One common finding is that intrathecal pressure is increased in the seated posture and aggravates discogenic LBP.

• During sitting, high pressure is found at the ischial tuberosities which is associated with high load to the spine.

• Proper sitting alignment reduced muscular activity, maintained proper lordosis, increased intervertebral disc heights, which could potentially reduce LBP.

Research indicated that for a computer workspace there are four things to look at regarding the chair to prevent LBP.

- 1. Backrest**
  - Lumbar support
  - If no lumbar support, use a rolled up towel or a removable back support
- 2. Seat**
  - Feet flat on ground or use footrest for stable support
  - Knee slightly higher than the seat
- 3. Armrest**
  - Supports forearm and elbow
  - Keeps arms close to the trunk
- 4. Base**
  - Strong, five-legged base

**Clinical bottom line**  
Occupation related LBP can be prevented and managed appropriately if multidisciplinary approach is utilised. By addressing the treatment targeting workplace functional concerns, activity avoidance and adherence to an appropriate intervention are keys to improving an individual's return-to-work.

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## HAVE A NICE DAY

### The best exercise



Swimming? Running or walking for 30 minutes every-day? Or going to Gym to work on a treadmill or cross trainer? Certainly, these are not bad. But, housework as a whole is the best.

Well does housework really count as exercise? A new research released in the UK found an hour of mopping the floor burns about the same calories as the same time spent lifting weights in the gym.

Scientists claim 238 calories are burned in an hour of pushing a mop and bucket across a floor, as well as wringing the mop out afterwards. Usually majority of the females in our country do the household works everyday without much appreciation. In fact, all housewives are working women.

According to another survey by the Discovery Channel, many of us find cleaning our homes mentally therapeutic. Get more involved in the kitchen and try to make your own room including the bed.

Housework is a great way to burn calories. In particular, polishing, dusting and sweeping are great for keeping arms in shape. Bending and stretching, especially, when you make the bed, wash windows or do the laundry are good for toning thighs and improving flexibility. Stop using lifts and run up and down the stairs — it is a good aerobic workout. In case of problems with heart/joint — these are not applicable.

We all need more or less 60 minutes of physical activity every day to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Anything that you do yourself active is going to increase your health benefits; it could be as little as making your own tea but do it on a regular basis.

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## HEALTH bulletin

### Interview

# Stem cell transplant and cord blood banking



### Tips

## Eat rice cold for fewer calories

Scientists say they have found a way to make rice less calorific — boil it with coconut oil and then refrigerate for half a day before eating.

According to the Sri Lankan researchers, treating rice in this way reduces its calories by up to 60%.

They told the American Chemical Society how the method made the starch in the rice less digestible so the body took on less fuel than it otherwise would.

UK nutrition experts cautioned there was no quick fix to losing weight.

They tested 38 varieties of rice to find the best way to boost something called "resistant starch".

Starchy foods such as rice, which are known as carbohydrates, are a good source of energy.

When we eat them, our body breaks them down into simple sugars.

Any that is leftover will be stored by the body and quickly converted to glucose as needed.

But too much glucose circulating in the blood can ultimately end up being stored as fat.

/StarHealthBD

## Vision loss increases risk for thoughts of suicide

Vision loss was linked with suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts, in a new study from South Korea.

"People with visual impairment often suffer substantial psychosocial consequences," the authors wrote in the British Journal of Ophthalmology.

"Ophthalmologists should embrace their responsibility to help reduce suicidality and prevent suicides in patients with low visual acuity by encouraging them to seek psychiatric care, especially in those patients who perceive severe stress because of their ocular disease," the authors wrote.



### STAR HEALTH REPORT

Patients suffering from blood related disorders like Leukaemia (blood cancer) are on the rise. We often hear about stem cell transplant to treat blood cancers and some blood disorders like Thalassaemia. But how sophisticated this stem cell transplant, often called bone marrow transplant is?

Dr. Patrick Tan is the Director of the Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant Programme and the Haematology Service at the Mt. Elizabeth Hospital, Singapore. He has long experience of bone marrow transplant to treat these blood related diseases.

Dr. Tan describes the stem cell (bone marrow) transplant procedure in short. According to Dr. Tan, the transplant team in his hospital harvest the bone marrow under general anaesthesia.

The bone marrow is collected using a needle inserted through the skin into the posterior space of the hip bone.

It involves minimal risks and discomfort. Multiple punctures might be needed to collect enough cells for the transplant.

The risks associated with the bone marrow harvest include infection,



**Dr. Patrick Tan**

bleeding, or pain from the harvest sites, as well as risks associated with general anaesthesia.

Prior to the stem cells transplant, you will receive high doses of radiotherapy or chemotherapy, or even both, in order to destroy all of your cancer cells as well as the normal blood cells in your bone marrow. This is known as the conditioning treatment.

The conditioning treatment varies for every transplant as it depends on the type of cancer you have, the type of transplant you are receiving, and any previous cancer treatment you may have had before.

The patient may feel the after

effects of the therapy like vomiting and high fever.

After the conditioning treatment is complete, the harvested stem cells are given to you through an IV catheter — this process is similar to a blood transfusion.

So it is not that complicated procedure, but it requires highly experienced team work. Especially the monitoring and follow up care are crucial for better outcome.

Dr. Tan says that we have to keep in mind that stem cell transplant is done for the end stage life threatening diseases, not for common blood disorders.

The outcome of the transplant depends on the modality of the disease, matching of the donors and follow up care.

Dr. Tan warned that sometimes the cancer may get relapse or secondary malignancy. So the earlier the treatment starts, the better the outcome is likely to be.

Dr. Tan also discussed about cord blood banking. Cord blood is a good source of stem cell. Cord blood from healthy individual may help other people with disorders like blood cancers. Cord blood can also save life in case of legislative problems.

## Knowing for better living

**Stroke** is the second leading cause of disability

Check your blood pressure regularly

Check your diabetes regularly

Control your body weight

Avoid smoking

Exercise regularly

Consult your Doctor



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