

Wear well padded garden gloves and use knee pads to protect your knees.

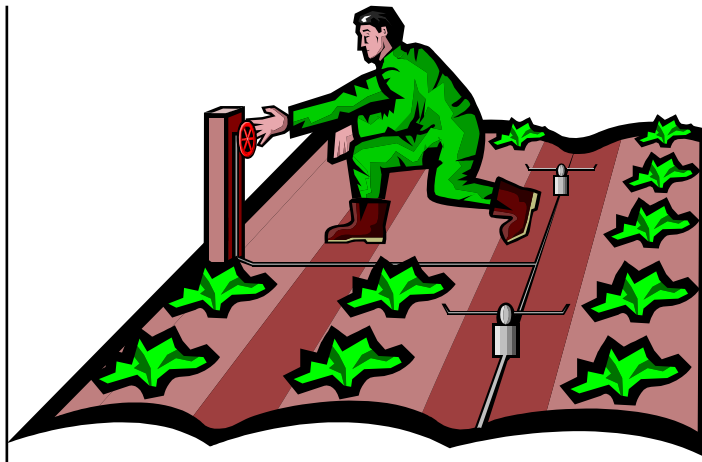
Having a kneeler sounds like a good idea, but its very easy to leave it behind when engrossed in a task. You can also make pouches in the knees of your gardening trousers to insert knee pads if you find them uncomfortable on the back of your knees. These are also available commercially as builders trousers.

When you finish gardening.

Stretch when you finish your garden workout. Every athlete knows to stretch their muscles when they have done their sport. Gardeners should do the same. Make this part of your routine so that you do this after clearing away your tools. Have a good hot shower, not a bath as this can force your neck forwards.



Go and enjoy your garden after all your hard work - have a cuppa or your favourite tittle and admire your handiwork.



How to contact us

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Call in to see us

Monday to Friday 9.00am -5.30pm

Saturday 9.00am — 12 noon

The Natural Health Centre

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There is a large free car park

Bus No 20 from town runs frequently

14/05/11

GREEN TIPS BACK TO GARDENING



**The
Natural Health Centre
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Green Tips

Does your back ache, do your wrists feel sore or do your knees throb after a hard day's work in your garden? Here are a few tips to keep the day free of aches and pains:



Stretch before your garden workout.

Put your hands on your hips, bend backwards and look at the sky to stretch your spine.

Stand with one foot in front of the other, with the feet widely spaced. Bend the knee of the front foot so that the muscles in the calf of the back leg are stretched. Change legs.

Be Balanced.

Try to use both sides of your body evenly. If digging, forking, sweeping or hoeing most people will prefer to have the same foot forwards and the same arm lower on the tool. Try doing it the other way round. When doing this initially, you may find it very tricky, so don't hoe near anything important as you may damage a plant you are trying to cultivate.



When gardening all day, rotate tasks every 30 minutes or so to use different muscle groups

An example of this would be to mow for 30 minutes, then cut the edges or do some weeding for 30 minutes, before returning to mowing.

Use the right tools for the right job, ergonomic garden tools are designed to decrease stress on joints and muscles.

If you are not strong, use a small spade and fork, and not one designed for a large man. Strimmers are available which have a harness to distribute the weight. Petrol mowers can be obtained that have a key to start them, rather than sharply yanking a cord to start the engine.

Use a wheelbarrow as much as possible.

There also barrows on the market that are easier to handle, such as ones with two wheels.

Lift by squatting and using your knees, not your back.

Even if you are only lifting your trowel, remember that you are also lifting the weight of your upper body and the stresses on your lumbar spine are considerable. If you also scoop one arm downwards to perform a lift, in other words, bending sideways, you will put even more unnecessary strain on the spine.

Tips when using hand tools.

When using hand tools make sure you wrap your thumb around the handle so you don't push with your thumb - try to find ones with cushioned handles. Remember that always kneeling on the same one knee isn't good; it strains the knee, makes you twist in the same one-sided fashion, which is bad for your back as well as making it more difficult for you to remember to try to use the non dominant side.

