

Preventing stress injuries

Today the public often spends hours at the computer. So it's important to know about the causes of repetitive stress injuries and how to prevent them.

Repetitive stress injuries are conditions caused by placing too much stress on a joint, and they vary in type and severity. Most repetitive stress injuries are linked to the stress of repetitive motions at the computer. These injuries may occur from heavy computer or video game use, texting or other repetitive motions.

A repetitive stress injury occurs when stress is placed on a joint, pulling on the tendons and muscles around the joint. When the stress occurs repeatedly, the body does not have time to recover and becomes irritated. The body reacts to the irritation by increasing the amount of fluid in that area to reduce the stress placed on the tendon or muscle. Conditions that are the result of repetitive stress injuries include:

- Carpal tunnel syndrome: swelling inside a narrow "tunnel" formed by bone and ligament in the wrist; the tunnel surrounds nerves that conduct sensory and motor impulses to and from the hand, leading to pain, tingling, and numbness
- Cervical radiculopathy: disc compression in the neck, often caused by repetitive cradling of a phone on the shoulder
- Epicondylitis: elbow sore-

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ness often called "tennis elbow"

- Ganglion cyst: swelling or lump in the wrist resulting from jelly-like substance that has leaked from a joint or tendon sheath

- Reflex sympathetic dystrophy: a condition characterized by dry, swollen hands and loss of muscle control; consistently painful

- Tendinitis: tearing and inflammation of tendons connecting bones to muscles

Preventive measures can help avoid repetitive stress injuries altogether:

- Always sit up straight. Slouching or crouching over the keyboard can place undue stress on the neck, back, or spine and lead to an repetitive stress injury

- Avoid tensing shoulders.

- Legs should be positioned comfortably and feet should be flat on the floor or on a footrest with the legs and hips perpendicular relative to the spine.

- Pounding the keyboard is unnecessary and can hurt you and the keyboard! Using a light touch to type is best. Also, be

sure not to reach for the keys; if so, the keyboard should be moved closer. Maintain a 90-degree angle between the wrists and elbows and the upper part of the arms. Fingers and wrists should remain level while typing.

Taking frequent breaks is also important to prevent repetitive stress injuries. It's easy to lose track of time and forget to take breaks, so make sure to rest eyes, back, wrists, and neck every half hour or so.

Stretching, getting a snack or a drink, or walking can help avoid future pain. Eye twitching; sore, tired, burning, itching, or dry eyes; blurred or double vision; and increased sensitivity to light are all symptoms of eyestrain, so look away from the computer and focus on something far away every once in a while. Proper lighting of the workspace will also help to prevent eyestrain.

Many times, repetitive stress injuries are caused by using the wrong tool for the job. Because most computer systems are designed for the body of a 25 year old man, be sure to get chairs, monitors, input devices, and keyboards that are suitable for your size.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact Tranda Watts, Multi-County Extension Specialist at twatts@ksu.edu or call 785-443-3663.



Norton Forensics Night

The Norton Community High School Forensics team performed at Norton Forensics Night on Thursday. (Pictured) Audrie Burge's Serious Solo was an intense and gripping performance. Forensics Night gave the team an opportunity to sharpen their performances before the state competition. Norton has won nine of the 11 tournaments it's competed in and finished in second place in the other two.

—Telegram photo by Mike Stephens

CLUB NEWS

Members of GFWC Mid-Century met for their Spring Dinner at the Landmark Inn. Following dinner a short business meeting was conducted by Margaret Thomas, president.

The group voted to give a monetary contribution to support the Breakfast 101 Project and to provide subscriptions to "Kind News" for the kindergarten classes at Eisenhower Elementary School.

Members are collecting pop

tabs and clipping coupons to support projects of GFWC of Kansas. These will be taken to the state convention in May. Three club members, Doris Johnston, Lynn Nelson and Beverly Kindler will have stitchery projects entered for the art and craft display at the state convention. Margaret Thomas and Beverly Kindler will be delegates.

Darlene McEwen reminded members of programs, projects

and accomplishments as she presented the club history for the year. Nineteen members and Carol Voss, a guest, were in attendance.

Hostesses were Mary Beth Boyd, Melba Witt and Beverly Kindler.

The meeting was conducted with the presentation of a reading, "Words To Live By - Taking Time," by Melba Witt and Beverly Kindler.

SENIOR CENTER MENU

Thursday, May 1 - Swiss steak, au gratin potatoes, Italian blend vegetables, bread and rosy applesauce.

Friday, May 2 - Chef salad, mixed fruit w/banana, crackers and brownie.

Monday, May 5 - Hamburger gravy, mashed potatoes, corn, biscuit and peaches.

Tuesday, May 6 - Teriyaki chicken fillet, broccoli, garden rice, bread and pineapple.

Wednesday, May 7 - Goulash, 3-bean salad, strawberries and bananas, bread and pudding.

Thursday, May 8 - Turkey slice, sweet potatoes, coleslaw, bread and gelatin w/fruit.

Friday, May 9 - Roast beef, mashed potatoes/gravy, green beans, roll and fruit crisp.

Monday, May 12 - Swedish meatballs, cook's choice vegetable, noodles, bread and Mandarin oranges.

Tuesday, May 13 - BBQ chicken sandwich, tater tots or triangles, cottage cheese w/fruit, bun and cookie.

Wednesday, May 14 - Steak fingers, scalloped potatoes, peas, bread and apricots.

Thursday, May 15 - Pasta salad w/ham and vegetables, 5-cup salad, breadstick and birthday cake.

Friday, May 16 - Frito chili cheese pie, peas and carrots, chips and hot cinnamon apple slices.

Monday, May 19 - Pork cutlet, parsley potatoes, seasoned carrots, bread and mixed fruit.

Tuesday, May 20 - Taco salad, tropical fruit, chips and cook's choice complement.

Wednesday, May 21 - Baked fish, macaroni and cheese, stewed tomatoes, bread and Jello w/fruit.

Thursday, May 22 - Oven

baked chicken, mashed potatoes/gravy, corn, bread and cantaloupe.

Friday, May 23 - Hamburger patty, cook's choice vegetable, orange-pineapple salad, bun and bar cookie.

Monday, May 26 - Closed for Memorial Day

Tuesday, May 27 - Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, mixed vegetables, bread and apricots.

Wednesday, May 28 - Turkey Ala King, winter mixed vegetables, cucumbers and onions, biscuit and rosy pears.

Thursday, May 29 - Cook's choice entree, hash brown casserole, pea salad, bread and fruit cobbler.

Friday, May 30 - Ham, sweet potatoes, green beans, bread and plums.

JENNINGS NEWS

By Louise Cressler

Reminders: United Methodist Women meet May 7 at the church.

American Red Cross Blood Drive will be held at the United Methodist Church May 9 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Contact Marge Hartzog 785-678-3010.

Mother's Day dinner at the Sunflower Senior Center May 11 will be served by the Jennings Lions Club from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Norton Correctional men were in Jennings Wednesday putting a polyurethane finish on the Community Hall floor. We appreciate the work they do for the city.

The Tuesday Study Club members enjoyed spring weather on the drive to Stratton, Neb., on April 22. The meeting held at the Church of Christ was called to order by Vice President, Sue Long. Joan McKenna read the minutes of the previous meeting and gave the treasurer's report. Roll Call of "Crafts I Make" was answered by Rachel Carter,

Pat Foster, Patty Foster, Sue Long, Roberta McAllister, Joan McKenna, Shelley McKenna, Lynn Tacha and guest Carolyn Woolard. Members paid dues for next year. Patty Foster was elected as the new Secretary/Treasurer and Lynn Tacha was appointed as Angel Tree Chairman. Ideas for programs for next year were discussed. Everyone then enjoyed a delicious lunch. Marilyn Criger of Grandma's Treasure Chest, Stratton, Neb., gave the program on crafts made from recycled items. Marilyn displayed various crafts she had made from discarded items, dumpster finds and auction bargains. Everything is recycled into a new treasure. Marilyn allowed each member to design their own craft from items she had brought to the meeting. The Club will resume in September.

Card players at the Sunflower Senior Center Wednesday included Agnes Wahlmeier, Deb Campbell, Carol Carter, Eleanor Morel, Diane Carter, Stan and Ramona Shaw, Wayne and

Louise Cressler.

Stan and Ramona Shaw are happy to announce the arrival of their great-granddaughter, Greyson Marie Gillespie born Monday, April 21, at Hays Medical Center. Proud parents are Aaron and Tara Gillespie and brother Jackson, almost five years old.

Kay Melia
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Gardeners generally despise those late spring cold snaps that seem to make a mockery of the sometimes stilted planting plans we have been making since early February. It's May, for crying out loud! It's time to plant! Every gardener knows that! And then another period of "sub-May" temperatures and heavy winds passes through and I find myself struggling to keep those beautiful tomato plants warm for a while longer.

The last time we visited at length about tomatoes in the garden was early March when we were discussing the project of growing some of our own tomato transplants, and that it was important to get them started at the proper time so that they would be the right size when it came time to plant them outside. My proposed planting date was May 1. As I sit here with pen in hand and great expectations on my mind, I suddenly realize that May 1 was yesterday! But you know what? It will likely be the middle of next week before I actually plant them outside.

The main reason for the delay is that soil temperatures must get back up after taking a nosedive during the cold and

windy final week of April. And let's face it. My average last frost date is May 6 so maybe I shouldn't be in too big of a hurry anyway. However, my home grown plants are really growing and seem to beg for a less crowded environment outside. So, adding and subtracting the good and the bad, and with a quick admonishment to the weather man, those transplants are going outside before May 8, barring some kind of stupid May blizzard, which is certainly within possibility.

For the past several years, I have preached loudly about how I felt it was important to set out tomato plants a little earlier than we have in past years. The earlier you plant them in the garden, the earlier you will pick a tomato. The season for picking tomatoes is much too short in this area anyway. But if we can safely put the plants outside sooner, then the picking season will be longer.

In order to plant them a little earlier, you must have a plan to protect the plants from a late frost. If you do not have a plan, then you must wait until later,

which results in a shorter harvest season.

Last year, I set out my plants on May 12, later than I planned. I picked my first tomato, a Northern Exposure, on July 16. My first killing frost last fall came on Oct. 16. My harvest season therefore lasted 90 days. I doubt that you can expect a much longer harvest season in this area. If you plant later, you pick later. If you plant earlier, you risk a freeze.

My plan to protect the early planted fragile plants is to utilize five foot high wire cages, with the bottom two feet securely covered with black plastic. If a frost threatens, I'll drop a page of newspaper inside the cage, on top of the plant, and they're good to go.

I like fresh homegrown tomatoes. From what I hear, so do you. I think it's important to try to lengthen the tomato growing season as much as we safely can. I'll plant the best varieties for my area. I'll prepare a proper seed bed. I'll plant as early as I dare, providing proper plant protection. I'll pick tomatoes earlier!



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