



Hundreds of Rollback items online!



Walmart.ca

Shop now



Money Stress? We Can Help!


Get unstuck from your money anxiety by rewiring your subconscious attitudes about money.

CLICK HERE



LIFE

Kneeling gardeners face growing pains



By Melissa Carr, Special to 24 hours
Thursday, May 15, 2014 11:50:55 PDT AM



Gardening is a fun activity, but crouching, bending and kneeling put a lot of strain on different parts of your body. (FILE PHOTO/ QMI AGENCY)

Vancouver is known for its outdoor activities and — as the weather warms up — many are spending more time in the sun. Gardening is popular because it is suitable for people of all ages and abilities. Getting your hands into the soil, planting things that are beautiful or edible can be therapeutic.

Just remember, gardening is also physical and may remind you of your various aches and pains.

A big part of gardening requires crouching, kneeling, or sitting on a low stool, meaning the knees, hips, and lower back can feel the crunch. Arthritic hands, carpal tunnel syndrome, and neck pain are also common.

Some things you can do to help prevent pain while gardening include mixing up your activities so you are not doing a repetitive action for too long. You can also take frequent breaks and use well-designed tools that are sharp and with padded, non-slip grips. Also, stay hydrated and try not to be in one static position for too long, especially if you stiffen up with immobility. Use props — cushions, low benches, blankets or towels — to set yourself up.

Even still, pain may persist and treatment is needed. Better to address the pain as early as possible, as pain that is ignored can take longer to heal. Acupuncture has a long history of successful treatment of pain and injury — it can help improve joint function so you can garden more comfortably.

In 2004, a landmark study of 570 patients with knee osteoarthritis were randomly assigned to receive acupuncture, fake acupuncture, or an Arthritis Foundation self-help course for managing their condition. The study, published in the prestigious Annals of Internal Medicine, was done with rheumatologists and registered acupuncturists. It found that by week eight of weekly sessions, the group receiving acupuncture had significantly better function, and by week 14 had a significant decrease in pain, as compared to the sham and self-help groups. By the end of the study, the acupuncture group had a 40% decrease in pain and improvement in function compared to their baseline starting assessments.

Knee osteoarthritis is only one of the many types of pains that acupuncture can address, so if you find that pain is limiting your ability to enjoy activities like gardening, get treatment so that you can get back out there — your flowers and plants are waiting for you.

Melissa Carr is a registered doctor of Traditional Chinese Medicine, caring for patients in an integrative medicine clinic in Vancouver.

[Registered Acupuncturist](#)
[acunourish.ca](#)
Combining Massage with Acupuncture
Book Online 24/7. Evenings/Weekends

URReader's comments »

If you already have an account on this newspaper, you can login to the newspaper to add your comments.


By adding a comment on the site, you accept our terms and conditions and our netiquette rules.

0 Comments

Vancouver 24 hrs

 Login ▾

Sort by Best ▾

Share  Favorite ★



Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

 Subscribe

 Add Disqus to your site