



Copies can be obtained by logging on to <http://tpm.scgov.net> or contacting Angela Deem at [adeem@scgov.net](mailto:adeem@scgov.net)

## Maintain a Healthy Back

We don't think very much about our backs—that is, until they start to hurt. The good news is that, in many cases, back pain can be prevented. Here are the top 10 ways to maintain a healthy back.

1. **Maintain a healthy weight.** Excess weight tends to creep up slowly, so we may not be aware of how it affects us and how extra weight takes a toll on the whole body.
2. **Strengthen the abdominal and back muscles.** A strong core—which includes all the muscles of the trunk—is important for avoiding injury, whether you're cleaning your house, playing tennis or sitting at a desk all day.
3. **Lift items properly.** Protect your back when lifting anything by standing close to the object with your feet apart to give you a stable base. Squat down while keeping the spine in proper alignment and contract your abdominals as you lift using your legs.
4. **Strengthen the leg muscles.** Along with the core muscles, the leg muscles play a vital role in helping you maintain good posture and body mechanics. And strong leg muscles can take much of the burden off the back when you're lifting heavy items.
5. **Stay flexible.** Some forms of exercise, such as yoga, Pilates and tai chi, may help relieve or prevent back pain by increasing flexibility and reducing tension.
6. **Maintain good posture.** When your posture is good and you move your body correctly, you reduce the strain on your back.
7. **Buy a comfortable mattress.** Most of us spend a good deal of time in bed, which is why a good mattress is such a wise investment. Do some research, test the mattress out at the store and ask for recommendations.
8. **Reduce stress.** Stress increases tension in all your muscles including your back. Reduce or better manage your stress and you may literally feel as if the weight has been lifted from your shoulders.
9. **Warm up before activity.** Beginning any activity with cold muscles puts you at risk for injury, so take the time to get your muscles and joints warm and limber first.
10. **Support the lower back when sitting.** Use a rolled towel, small pillow or specially designed seat support available at medical supply stores. Remove the support every half hour for five minutes to give your lower back a change of position. After sitting for a prolonged period, straighten your back to an upright position and, if possible, stand and walk around to give your back a break.

Visit [www.acefitness.org](http://www.acefitness.org) for more information

## Get Your Flu Shot this Season!

Clinics are being held at various locations for County employees, dependents over 18 and retirees/spouses.

Please visit the TPM website at <http://tpm.scgov.net/FluShots.aspx> for a list of dates and locations.

Flu Shots are also offered at the Employee Health Center daily, Mon-Fri, from 8:30AM-4:30 PM, no appointment necessary.

## November is American Diabetes Month

Diabetes is a serious disease that affects the body's ability to produce or respond properly to insulin, a hormone that allows blood glucose (sugar) to enter the cells of the body and be used for energy. Nearly 21 million children and adults in the U.S. have diabetes. It is the fifth deadliest disease in the U.S. and it has no cure.

### Reduce your risk for Diabetes

#### Be physically active and balance calories

Just 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity, coupled with a 5-10% reduction in body weight will significantly reduce your risk for diabetes.

#### Learn your family history

It's important to know whether diabetes and heart disease (heart disease increases your risk for Diabetes) run in your family. Knowing the facts helps you do everything you can to reduce your risk.

#### Are you ready to make changes in your lifestyle?

Making a few small changes to eat healthier and be more active can have a big effect on your health. Going slowly raises your chances of being able to stick with your changes.

### Have you been diagnosed with Diabetes?

Understanding your Diabetes can play an important role in living a healthy life. **Sarasota Memorial Hospital** offers a comprehensive outpatient education program including day and evening classes offered at Sarasota and Blackburn Point locations. Your Aetna medical insurance through Sarasota County Government covers this class at 100% with no member co-pay or coinsurance. Please visit the TPM website <http://tpm.scgov.net/Diabetes.aspx> to ensure this class is covered by your insurance, or call SMH for more information on their classes: **941-917-7468**