



Holmewood Osteopathic Practice Newsletter

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Winter 2020

Lie back in comfort

Looking after your mattress

Welcome to the Winter 2020 edition of the Holmewood Osteopathic Practice Newsletter, and welcome to a new decade. Hope that you have had a good festive season and wish you a happy and healthy New Year.

As part of your goal for a healthy year, which includes keeping your spine in tip top condition, do not overlook the importance of a good mattress. After a busy day there is nothing quite like getting into bed and feeling comfortable, relaxing and waking up feeling refreshed. If this is not the case might your mattress be a cause?

I often get asked about what type of mattress it is best to use, and so here is advice based on research and guidelines.

The European guidelines for prevention in low back pain (AK Burton et al Nov 2004) say that there is no robust evidence for or against recommending any specific mattress to prevent low back pain, but persisting symptoms may be reduced with a medium firm, rather than a hard mattress.

A trial was carried out assessing adults with back pain that was not complicated by leg pain, nerve pain or a disease process. The findings were that a medium firm mattress can have a positive effect on low back pain associated with waking and rising from bed (1). The kind of mattress that is best for you is down to personal choice. It will depend amongst other things on your body type

A mattress that claims to be orthopaedic does not necessarily mean it will be good for your back. Quality will depend on thickness of base material, number of springs and quality of component materials.

Waterbeds contain a treated water filled mattress which sits in a foam frame, zipped into a fabric casing. The higher quality water mattress has a mixture of water and air chambers which damp down wave like motion. Most will have a thermostat and therefore require a power source and ongoing cost. The mattress is synthetic. Waterbeds are designed to contour to your body shape and reduce stress on pressure points.

Visco-elastic (memory foam) mattresses are made from polyurethane and visco-elastic foam. These mattresses will contour to the shape of your body and then slowly return to their original shape when not in use. The better quality mattresses of this type soften with body heat. They are constructed from a bottom layer of polyurethane covered with a thicker layer of visco-elastic foam. The more expensive mattresses have a thick visco-elastic layer (7-10cm) which will give a

Water and foam mattresses can be beneficial if you find that bony points such as shoulders, hips and ribs get sore when you are lying in bed.

Pocket sprung mattresses provide their support through springs, and padding. They are constructed of several layers. The foundation layer consists of a metal or a wooden frame with springs. The thickness of the wire spring coils varies, and thicker stiffer coils create a harder mattress. The layer covering the springs is either synthetic polyurethane, foam, cotton batting or wool. Natural fibres will cost more, as will a greater number of layers and greater thickness of layers. The more springs per square metre the more supportive a mattress will be.

A medium firm mattress will have approximately 2000 springs. The better quality mattresses will have hessian covering the springs, up to 4 layers of wool felt and a couple of layers of lambs wool covered with a cotton ticking. Keep an eye out for the quality of the stitching.

Brixton used to have a very renowned mattress manufacturer, established in 1945. They make bespoke sprung mattresses by hand, and can accommodate specific mattress needs. Unfortunately for us south Londoners they have moved out of London. <http://www.norrisbedding.co.uk/>

1. Kovacs et al The Lancet, Vol 362, Nov 15 2003).

1. Use a washable mattress (and pillow) cover to protect your mattress from stains. Buy them in a purpose-made 'barrier' fabric if you have a dust allergy.

2. Throw back bedclothes in the morning and leave the bed to air for 20 minutes to allow body moisture to evaporate.

3. Turn your mattress over and end to end every three or four months. For new mattresses do this every week for the first three months, to help upholstery fillings settle down more evenly. Mind your back when doing this and don't do it on your own.

4. To keep your mattress at its best, do not let children bounce on it.

5. Do not sit on the edge of the mattress.

6. Try to avoid your mattress getting wet. If it does, air dry it. If necessary use gentle detergent and water to spot clean. Do not use solvent based cleaners on visco-elastic foam mattresses.

7. A good quality mattress that is used regularly will last about 8-10 years. Poorly cared for mattresses will not last as long. High quality mattresses may last longer.

Allotment news. I am pleased to report that I have managed to grow a decent crop of brussel sprouts this year, unlike last year where they all went "big and blousey". Apparently planting them good and deep and making sure the roots were undisturbed has helped. I hope all is well in your garden/plot.





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Polenta Pizza

This is a good meal to make if you have gluten free dietary needs or you fancy a change.

Ingredients:

1 packet of polenta (quick cook or traditional)
500ml water
500ml milk, (rice or soya milk can be substituted)
1 large bay leaf
2 cloves of garlic
1 stock cube of your choice
Olive oil
Freshly grated parmesan cheese.

First of all make the polenta base with either quick cook or traditional polenta.

Heat a pan of 500ml milk mixed with 500ml water. Add the bay leaf, stock cube and whole cloves of garlic. Stir to dissolve the stock cube. Bring to the boil, then turn off the heat. Cover, and leave to infuse for 10 minutes.

Bring the pan back to simmer, slowly pour in approximately 300-500g of polenta, stirring constantly. Cook as per packet instructions. The finished consistency will be like mashed potato. Before turning off the heat, throw in the grated parmesan and a murderously large dash of olive oil. Stir the oil and cheese in and leave to stand.

Once the polenta has firmed up, tip it into an oiled shallow oven tray, and press it out with the back of your hand or large metal spoon until it covers the surface of the tray, and is approximately 2cm deep.

Next, make a quick tomato topping. Finely chop a medium onion and 1 clove of garlic. Fry off the onion and garlic in about 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add a can of chopped plum tomatoes, a dash of balsamic vinegar and any herb of your choice, stir and cook on medium heat for 10 minutes.

Allow to cool and then spread over the polenta base. Now add any type of cheese you like. I use gruyere, mozzarella, and emmental (this is not a low fat dish!), grilled vegetables, olives and any sliced meat if you wish.

Fees

2020 fees remain the same as last year. New patient £60.00
Ongoing patient £55.00

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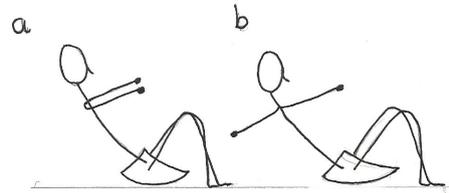
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Build-up to boat pose.

Care must be taken with this exercise as it can pull on the lower back if not done correctly. Do not do it if your back is acutely painful. This is an effective way of strengthening the lower deep abdominal muscles, these muscles help to support the lower back.



To start: sit on the floor with your legs outstretched. Bend both knees and place the soles of your feet on the floor.

A. Tuck your tail bone under so that your pelvis feels like it is moving towards your lower ribs, and allow your lower back to curl slightly. Tip backwards so that you are at an angle. Pull your naval towards your spine.

B. Stretch both arms out in front of you and put your palms together. Breath in. As you breath out take both arms out to the side. Keep your shoulders relaxed and down. Keep going breathing in and out as you move your arms in synchrony with your breath (breathing in arms come forward, breathing out arms spread wide). Aim to do this 10 times. To finish sit upright with knees bent and draw your chest to your knees relaxing your head down to your knees. Over time you can slowly increase the number of repetitions.

Rub it in.



Do anti-inflammatory gels work? The answer appears to be yes, they do. Clinicians have long recommended or prescribed topical non steroidal anti-inflammatory gels to apply to painful muscles or joints. Most of these preparations have a diclofenac or ibuprofen base. Studies carried out (1 & 2) have concluded that these medications are safe and effective for the treatment of painful and inflammatory conditions. They also have a lower rate of gut complication than oral anti-inflammatory medication.

It should be noted that those who cannot tolerate oral anti-inflammatory medication should not use topical preparations.

1. Topical NSAID's for acute pain: a meta analysis. Mason, Moore et al. BMC Family Practice 2004, 5:10.
2. Zacher & Altman et al. Topical diclofenac and its role in pain and inflammation an evidence based review. Current medical research and opinion 2008, Vol.24, No 4, p925-950.