

## “Got Back Pain?” How Back Injuries From Everyday Activities May Cause Painful Muscle Spasms

(NAPSA)—Physicians hear it all the time: “I was just doing some work around the house, and the next thing I knew I could hardly move. My back really hurts!”

These painful acute back injuries have many causes—lifting a child the wrong way, hitting a baseball harder than expected after sitting on the couch all winter, or bending over to weed your garden on a sunny day. What many people do not realize is that the intense pain felt after an acute back injury may be accompanied by muscle spasms.

“I see many patients with acute back pain, and what they don’t realize is that muscle spasms may also be causing discomfort,” explained Arnold J. Weil, M.D., of Non-Surgical Orthopaedics in Atlanta, Ga.

A muscle spasm occurs when a muscle tightens, usually resulting from an injury. A wide range of factors can trigger a muscle spasm, such as overexertion, bending or stretching, which results in injury causing muscle strain or rupture or irritation to a nerve that connects to a muscle. However, muscle spasms can also result from more sedentary activities such as sitting at your computer too long. During a muscle spasm, the muscle often feels like it is clenched in a hard knot and, as a result, may create pain, restrict movement or limit activity.

Muscle spasms are very common. A recent Harris Interactive survey found that four out of five U.S. adults said they have experienced muscle spasms. The most common causes of acute muscle spasms were routine day-to-day activities—household chores, work, gardening, mowing the lawn or lifting heavy objects.

Seeking medical attention early may help relieve painful muscle spasms. “Some people may try to tough it out,” commented Dr. Weil. “What they don’t realize is that there are treatments that



may relieve the muscle spasm and associated pain. They don’t need to suffer. By visiting a doctor when you first injure your back, you may get early relief and make sure that there are no serious underlying injuries.”

The good news is that there are many treatments for muscle spasms. Simple steps can help prevent muscle spasms or make them less intense. These include stretching regularly, knowing your limits, pacing yourself and giving your body time to rest after an activity.

### When to Watch Your Back: The Top 10 Activities Associated with Muscle Spasm According to Consumers:

1. Household chores
2. Work
3. Gardening, landscaping or mowing the lawn
4. Playing sports
5. Running/jogging
6. Driving
7. Home improvements or repairs
8. Traveling by car (but not driving)
9. Playing with children or grandchildren
10. Traveling by plane

Source: Harris Interactive Survey, “A Study About Muscle Spasms” 2007.



Health care professionals may also recommend medicines to treat acute muscle spasms and relieve the pain. For additional information about how to prevent and treat muscle spasms, visit [www.TreatMuscleSpasms.com](http://www.TreatMuscleSpasms.com).