

# Ready to exercise your green thumb?

# We can help!

**PHYSIOTHERAPY  
MASSAGE  
FITNESS  
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*Gardening season in New Brunswick is so short we want to get the most out of it.*

As a result, we amateur gardeners never fail to overdo the physical exertion. Here are some tips for those of you who have suffered enough with gardening and want to give your body some consideration this year.

Believe it or not, you should do warm-up exercises and stretches before you begin! Your body needs to get ready for the vigorous work ahead! A short walk followed by some gentle arm swings and reaching towards the sky is really all you need.

Plan ahead to reduce the amount of walking, pulling and



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pushing you do. Think about where you are going and how you are going to get yourself, your tools, plants and fertilizer to that spot the easiest way. A wheelbarrow, a wheeled light cart for heavier loads, a basket or gardening apron for your tools and seeds can make things easier.

Plan to work a little less the first day. After that take regular breaks. Change your position frequently. Alternate low, concentrated effort with activities that involve walking or standing. Stand up and stretch before you get tight!

### **BACK CARE**

Use proper lifting technique -lift with your legs; carry close to your body, lift loads that are appropriate for your size and condition! Use wheels! Get help!

Be careful not to twist your back when handling tools- maintain the natural curve, and move your legs and body with the tool you are using. Keep your knees bent



slightly with one foot ahead of the other for more comfortable hoeing.

If you cannot kneel, there are long-handled tools on the market. Use them to save your back. If you spend a lot of time bent forward it is often a good idea to stretch backward and

accentuate the curve in your lower back.

Let's hope this spring brings all the necessary mix of ingredients for beautiful summer flowers and a bountiful fall harvest!

*Happy gardening!!*



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