

July Wellness Action Message

Quarterly Theme: Musculoskeletal Health

July Message: The Importance of a Healthy Back



Take Action: Learn what Musculoskeletal Health is, how you can prevent back and neck pain and what habits you can start implementing in order to move easier.

What is Musculoskeletal Health (MSK)?

Musculoskeletal Health can be described as how well your body's system of muscles, bones, joints, and connective tissues work together. That system is what allows you to walk, run, jump, and so on. When it doesn't work properly, you'll feel pain and discomfort — and maybe even develop chronic conditions, all of which can affect activities in your day-to-day life (e.g., getting up and down stairs, carrying a grandchild, raking leaves).

Back and neck pain are common with people who spend a lot of time sitting or who don't get enough daily movement. Here are some of the top causes of it:

- Poor posture (slouching your shoulders and back)
- Poorly positioned equipment (computer, desk chair, etc.)
- Long periods of inactivity
- Repeating certain movements, especially those that twist or rotate your spine
- Lifting heavy objects

But here's the good news: It's possible to improve your musculoskeletal health and even decrease your pain.

Preventive Measures

There are preventive measures — those that you practice before pain begins — and solutions, which are ones that you do after the pain starts or persists.

- Get at least 150 minutes of exercise per week (think 30 minutes, 5 days a week)
- Prioritize a healthy diet to maintain strong muscles and bones.
- Set up an ergonomic-friendly workstation (feet flat on floor, thighs horizontal, back support, computer monitor at eye-level, arm support, relaxed shoulders)
- Stand up, move from your station, and stretch often

If you've already started aching, sharp, stabbing, and other musculoskeletal pain:

- Limit excess movement to prevent further injury
- Apply heat or ice to the problem area
- Take over-the-counter medication (ibuprofen, Tylenol)

Note: If your pain lasts longer than a few days/weeks or is severe, get in touch with your physician.

My Health Rewards – Journeys® courses related to back, muscle & joint health

Journeys are self-guided courses that can help you build healthy habits and earn rewards. You'll find back, muscle, and joint health strategies for easing pain. See how small changes can often make a big difference. Go to the mobile app or [log in to My Health Rewards](#) and visit the "Health" tab to explore the various **Back, Muscle & Joint Health Journeys®**. Complete a Journey each month and earn 250 points.

Back, Muscle & Joint Health



Beat Lower Back Pain
10 Days to Complete



Ease Arthritis Pain
10 Days to Complete



Move Better With Arthritis
14 Days to Complete



Repetitive Strain Injuries
13 Days to Complete

Utilize Omada® for Joint & Muscle Health

Omada® for Joint & Muscle Health combines personalized physical therapy (PT) with virtual technology. It's a proven program that can help build muscle, prevent pain, and treat existing aches and injuries. This virtual program* features:

- Fast, seamless access to a diagnosis and treatment from a licensed PT usually within 48 hours.
- PT-guided recovery that includes unlimited chat and video visits.
- App-guided exercises with 3D animations and voice narration to help with pacing and form.
- Video recordings of rehab exercises, which helps the PT assess form and progress.

Go to OmadaHealth.com/Medica-PT to fill out an eligibility screening. Get information with next steps, including how to download the Omada Joint & Muscle Health app.

**Your out-of-pocket costs will depend on your plan benefits and the services you access through the program.*

Additional resources at your fingertips

[Wellness Programs | Duluth Joint Powers Enterprise](#)

Medica.com/signin

[My Health Rewards](#)

[Omada for Joint & Muscle Health](#)