

With the weather getting warmer and all of April's showers, most of us are spending more and more time with our May flowers. Reflecting on a beautifully planted, weed-free garden can be a rewarding experience, but slowly behind the satisfaction are aches, pains, and blisters. Gardening is a very popular pastime for both men and women. The National Gardening Association states that two out of three American households take part in some gardening activity each year. Whether you're the type who likes to get your hands down in the dirt or if you prefer using power tools to get the job done...both come with hazards and safety precautions should be taken into consideration.

On a pleasant spring or summer weekend it's easy to spend all day outside doing lawn and garden work. Many don't think about protecting ourselves from the elements. When tending to our lawn/garden, keep these things in mind:

- Avoid the 10am – 2pm direct sunlight by gardening during early-morning or late-afternoon hours
- Keep hydrated with water, not sugary drinks or alcohol
- Pay attention to signs of heat-related illness, including extremely high body temperature, headache, rapid pulse, dizziness, nausea, and confusion
- Take frequent breaks by going indoors and relaxing in front of a fan
- Wear gloves to lower the risk of skin irritations, cuts, and certain contaminants
- Protect yourself from diseases caused by mosquitoes and ticks by wearing insect repellent, clothing treated with permethrin, long-sleeved shirts, and high rubber boots (since ticks are usually close to the ground)
- Help prevent sunburn by wearing long sleeves, wide-brimmed hats, and sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher, and don't forget to reapply



Over the winter almost everything is in some state of hibernation...even us. Most of us limit our outdoor activities during colder weather, in turn, limiting our exercise and muscle use. It's important to "warm-up" before any strenuous exercise...and yes, gardening can be considered strenuous exercise. It's also important to take steps to help prevent strains and sprains...just to name a few:

- Keep your back erect when working at ground level and when using long-handled tools, such as spades and rakes
- Bend at your knees and hips to lift objects
- Alternate or use both arms whenever possible
- Keep your elbows bent and don't rest your body weight on them
- Grip hand tools lightly
- Listen to your body...monitor your level of fatigue, heart rate, and physical discomfort



According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 40,000 people are treated in hospital emergency rooms each year for injuries from lawn and garden tools, mostly from using power tools. Follow these steps to help keep yourself from becoming a statistic:

- Know how to operate the equipment your using...read the manual
- Wear close-fitting clothes, sturdy shoes, safety glasses, and ear protection
- Handle gas carefully and always be aware of your power cords when using electric
- Never work on equipment when its running
- Always make sure children and pets are not in close proximity



Hopefully, with these tools, you'll keep your safety habits as well maintained as your lawn and garden. We've enclosed a packet of Black-Eyed Susan seeds, the MD state flower, to help get your gardening started. If you have any question or would like more information regarding yard work safety please contact **Tina M. Wynter at [TMW@TelcomInsGrp.com](mailto:TMW@TelcomInsGrp.com) or 800-222-4664 x3206.**

