

## BACK AND MUSCLE INJURIES AFFECT YOUR LIFE (IN A BAD WAY!)

We've all been there. Twisted our backs picking something up, or felt a weird twinge in a joint and it just won't seem to go away. All of us deal with little aches and pains especially as we get older. But sometimes these minor incidents turn into something a little scarier or painful, and the result can be an emergency room visit or even surgery. In 2011, (Injury Facts, 2013 – National Safety Council), 28,500,000 Americans suffered nonfatal, medically consulted injuries. 1 out of 11 people experienced an intentional injury in the home or community. In checking with the American Chiropractic Association ([www.acatoday.org](http://www.acatoday.org)), we learn that:

1. Low back pain is the single leading cause of disability worldwide.
2. One-half of all working Americans admit to having back pain symptoms each year.
3. Back pain is one of the most common reasons for missed work and is the second most common reason for visits to the doctor's office (outnumbered only by upper-respiratory infections).
4. Most cases of back pain are mechanical or non-organic—meaning they are not caused by serious conditions, such as inflammatory arthritis, infection, fracture or cancer.
5. Americans spend at least \$50 billion each year on back pain—and that's just for the more easily identified costs.
6. Experts estimate that as many as 80% of the population will experience a back problem at some time in our lives.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) just published an excellent 32-page booklet titled “A Basic Guide for Preventing Manual Material Handling Injuries”. Although it targets injury prevention for workers in residential construction, it is very useful for anyone who is working on projects around the house. Do yourself a favor and download this publication at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2013-111/> . And don't forget that warm-up exercises are key to muscle injury prevention. Some simple exercises are found at the end of this helpful booklet. Work Safely!