

Tips to Prevent Back Injuries During Fall Cleaning

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The State Fair is over and school has begun, both of which means summer is coming to an end and fall is right around the corner. With the fall season comes certain tasks around the house and yard. Get out the storm windows and dust off that rake, it's time for fall cleaning!

Back injuries are not something that we think about while cleaning, but they can happen very easily with one wrong twist or bend. Following a few simple tips can help prevent injury to your back. It's always a good idea to stretch before any physical activity to warm up the muscles. When lifting heavy items, such as your storm windows, it is very important to bend at your knees rather than at the waist. When bending or squatting with your knees and holding an object close to you while lifting, you are able to use your legs and arms to lift versus straining your back muscles. You also want to avoid any forward bending with twisting motions while lifting. Never take a chance on a back injury by lifting something that is too heavy, ask someone for help whenever possible.

A back injury can occur with something as simple as raking, even if there is no heavy lifting involved. When done improperly, the repetitive motion of raking can strain your back muscles. As with lifting, it is also very important to bend your knees with raking. Slightly bending your knees as you step forward with the rake helps to avoid a lot of forward bending at the waist, which when done over and over can cause injury. It is also a good idea to kneel or squat while bagging your leaves.

A combination of stretching and proper body positioning can help prevent injury to your back during your fall cleaning. If you would like to learn more, or if you have unfortunately suffered a back injury, please contact your physician or local physical therapist.