

## Health and Well-being

Please take time to respond to our **Workplace Health and Wellness survey**, your responses will be used to help plan the program and to decide which types of activities / programs to offer. The survey will remain online from Wednesday 18th of March to midnight Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April. Link to the Tell Us survey is <http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/TellUS2/SurveyForm.asp?ID=6242>

**A big thank you to all those who have already participated and we look forward to collating your responses and comments. Responses to your comments and summary of the survey will be published onto the [Wellbeing](#) page in April / May.**

Each Health and Well-being Newsletter will include articles promoting national awareness on various health issues.

### Musculoskeletal Conditions

Musculoskeletal conditions are defined as conditions of the bones, muscles and their attachments and the most common are back pain, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and osteoporosis.

#### Common Musculoskeletal Conditions are:

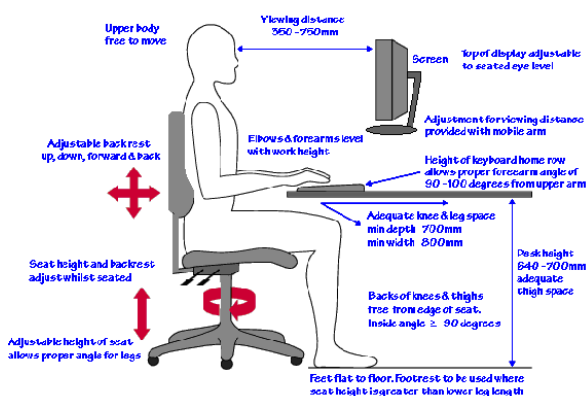
**Chronic back pain** can be attributed to numerous causes including muscle strain or the displacement of an intervertebral disc.

**Arthritis** is characterised by inflammation of the joints, often resulting in pain, stiffness, disability and deformity.

**Osteoarthritis** is a degenerative joint condition affecting the weight-bearing joints such as the hips, knees and ankles as well as the hands and spine, where there will be a progressive loss of bone density and decrease in the strength of the skeleton. **Rheumatoid arthritis** is an autoimmune disease causing chronic inflammation of the joints.

Arthritis can best be treated by medication and / or complementary therapies. Try to stay active, eat a healthy diet and quit smoking. You may find you need mechanical aids to help balance rest and activity. Also remember to acknowledge your feelings and seek support and advice. Help can be provided by [Arthritis SA](#) and via their Helpline 1800 011 041.

You can help prevent back pain with a good **Ergonomic workstation set up**.



Good ergonomics is essential for the office-bound worker. There are a number of benefits to working in an ergonomically-correct environment. They include:

- Lower occurrences of employee injury
- Lower instances of workers compensation claims due to repetitive stress injuries
- Peace of mind, knowing you are working in safe, healthy conditions
- Increased productivity due to an elevated comfort level

For further information look at OHSW & IM Services webpage for [Ergonomics for Screen-based Workstations](#) and look at Page 2 of [February 2008 newsletter](#)

Have [Workspace](#) installed on your computer to prevent musculo-skeletal injuries whilst working at computer based workstations. Staff only need to complete form [OHSW 61](#) to have the software installed.

**Flexibility** is the ability to move joints and muscles through their full range of motion and diminishes over time when these tissues are not stretched or exercised.

A person's starting point of flexibility is primarily due to genetics, gender and age; the level to which a person can develop their flexibility is due to level of physical activity and range of motion incorporated into exercise and stretching.



### Benefits of stretching

- Allows for greater freedom of movement;
- Assists in improved posture;
- Assists in physical and mental relaxation;
- Potential to reduce the risk of joint sprain and muscle strain;
- Potential to reduce risk of back problems;
- Potential to reduce muscle soreness and tension;
- Potential to assist in improved circulation.

When you're stretching, keep it gentle. Breathe freely as you hold each stretch. Don't bounce. Expect to feel tension while you're stretching. If you feel pain, you've gone too far. As we grow older, we tend to lose flexibility, usually as a result of inactivity rather than the aging process itself.

**The less active we are, the less flexible we are likely to be.**

- Try doing a few stretches immediately after a shower or while soaking in a warm bath as the warmth elevates muscle temperature enough to make them more pliable and receptive to stretching.
- Wake yourself up with a few full-body stretches by pointing the toes and reaching the arms above your head. This can clear your mind and help jump-start your morning;
- Take a stretching class such as Yoga or Pilates. Committing to a class will help you to stick with a regular stretching program.



Yoga & Pilates @ CE contact [HealthFitnessCentre@unisa.edu.au](mailto:HealthFitnessCentre@unisa.edu.au)  
 Yoga (+meditation) @ CE contact [maarten.immink@unisa.edu.au](mailto:maarten.immink@unisa.edu.au)  
 Yoga @ CW contact [tristana.sidoryn@unisa.edu.au](mailto:tristana.sidoryn@unisa.edu.au)

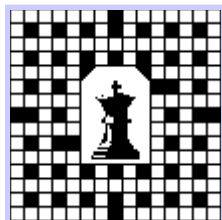
School of Health Sciences' [Exercise Physiology Clinic](#)



is a specialist exercise testing and prescription service to assist with the management of chronic health conditions. Exercise prescription will be tailored to suit individual needs to provide additional motivation and guidance they offer weekly group exercise classes specialising in the management of different health conditions.

**Health & Fitness**

When people think about staying fit, they generally think from the neck down. The health of your brain plays a critical role in almost everything you do: thinking, feeling, remembering, working, and playing – even sleeping. The good news is that there is a lot you can do to help keep your brain healthier, simple activities like attempting (and maybe even finishing!) the daily crossword puzzle, Chess, Sudoku puzzles, taking on a new hobby, or exploring a new language can make a world of difference. Staff Development and training workshops are available at all campuses and [Development at a glance](#) will show you what events are currently on offer. Remember, learning new skills keeps new connections forming in the brain.



Research shows regular exercise improves quality of life and mental health, it can also boost learning, concentration and abstract reasoning by 15%.

Stress is a physical, mental, and emotional response to life's changes and demands.

Stress is experienced in levels. Low levels may not be noticeable at all. Occasional, moderate stress can be positive and challenge people to act in creative and resourceful ways. High levels can be harmful, leading to chronic disease. Learning to recognise and control stress is an important part of regulating your life. Many people get stressed because they feel they have too many pressures piling in on them.



Don't do too much at once, **deal with one thing at a time and break jobs into achievable steps.**

[EAPdirect](#) is a confidential on-line service that gives UniSA staff (and your family) access to wellbeing information and services. [EAPdirect](#) offers a range of opportunities for you to improve your work life balance by providing access to:



- self assessment tools designed to allow you the opportunity to gauge the status of your own personal wellbeing
- an on-line counselling service that is a confidential link between you and a counsellor
- helpful and practical information about a range of personal and work issues that you may face throughout life

In order for staff to setup a confidential login each staff member must enter [EAPdirect](#) as a **new user** on the welcome screen. You then enter a user id of **unisausr** and a password of **usrkey**. Once in the registration screen you are able to setup your personal login details.

[Davidson Trahaire](#) provide a professional and confidential counselling service to you and your immediate family. Together you can discuss the nature of the problem and develop a course of action to overcome it.

If you are unsure as to whether the counselling may be able to help you, you may ring 1300 360 364 and discuss this with the counsellor before making an appointment. All counselling conducted is free to staff and their immediate family members.



The [Manager Assist Program](#) is part of the Employee Assistant Program service provided by Davidson Trahaire. The program can assist managers and team leaders in managing situations such as:

- an employee with problems impacting on work performance or behaviour
- interpersonal conflict
- a distressed or troubled employee
- assisting an employee not coping with change
- difficulties with team functioning.

**Physical exercise** is any bodily activity that enhances or maintains physical fitness and overall health. Frequent and regular physical exercise boosts the immune system, and helps prevent heart disease, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes and obesity. It also improves mental health and helps prevent depression.

Choose an activity you enjoy and can be easily integrated into your lifestyle. You don't have to be pumping iron or doing treadmill work every day – start with a 20-minute walk in the park, perhaps at lunchtime and do it three times a week.



**The key is to start small.** By making little changes to your schedule over time you will be surprised at what you can achieve.

The [City East and Magill Health and Fitness Centres](#) run by UniSA's School of Health Sciences can provide you with your own personalised fitness program and assist you achieve your exercise goals as part of your health plan.



[City East Fitness Centre](#) also offers pilates and yoga. [Magill Fitness Centre](#) offers punch fit and karate sessions.

[Mawson Lakes Sport Centre](#) offers martial arts training as well as a fitness gym, indoor and squash courts, table tennis, pool table etc, contact [kim.boerth@unisa.edu.au](mailto:kim.boerth@unisa.edu.au)



Physiotherapists are trained to evaluate and improve movement and function of the body, with particular attention to physical mobility, balance, posture, fatigue, and pain. Contact the [Physiotherapy Clinic](#) for advice, assessment and treatment of back

care, posture, neck and limb pain, sports injuries, orthopaedic injuries (including rehabilitation after surgery), headaches, exercise and repetitive strain injuries, over-use syndromes and fitness and wellbeing.

Did you know that your two feet have 52 bones and your entire body has only 206 bones? Besides the bones, your feet have 107 ligaments, 19 muscles, and move with 33 joints.



No wonder your feet aren't always feeling at their optimum, the [Podiatry Clinic](#) can help discover what is causing you discomfort. The Clinic also manufactures insole and orthosis as well as treating lesions of the skin and nails, including corns, callus, and nail problems, infections (eg plantar warts).

**Healthy eating** is not about strict nutrition philosophies, staying unrealistically thin, or depriving yourself of the foods you love. Rather, it's about feeling great, having more energy, and keeping yourself as healthy.

Choose the types of foods that improve your health and avoid the types of foods that raise your risk for such illnesses as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Expand your range of healthy choices to include a wide variety of delicious foods.



Pay attention to what you eat and choosing foods that are both nourishing and enjoyable helps support an overall healthy diet.

**Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes** - foods high in complex carbohydrates, fibre, vitamins, and minerals;

**Eat a wide variety of foods** that you don't normally eat;

**Eat foods rich in calcium and iron;**

**Limit sugary foods, salt, and refined-grain products;**

**Keep fat to a minimum;**

**Keep portions moderate** - you can enjoy your favourite sweets and fried foods in moderation, as long as they are an occasional part of your overall healthy diet;

**Drink more water** and

**Get moving**, a healthy diet improves your energy and feelings of well-being and adding regular physical activity and exercise will make any healthy eating plan work even better.

It is also not just *what* you eat, but *how* you eat.

- **Take time to chew your food:** Chew your food slowly, savouring every bite.
- **Avoid stress while eating:** When we are stressed, our digestion can be compromised, causing problems like colitis and heartburn. Avoid eating while working, driving, arguing, or watching TV (especially disturbing programs or the news).
- **Listen to your body:** Ask yourself if you are really hungry. You may really be thirsty, so try drinking a glass of water first.
- **Eat early, eat often:** Starting your day with a healthy breakfast can jumpstart your metabolism, and eating the majority of your daily intake early in the day gives your body time to work those calories off. Also, eating small, healthy meals throughout the day, rather than the standard three large meals, can help keep your metabolism going and ward off snack attacks.



Eat healthy by choosing low glycemic index carbs. This is the secret to long-term health reducing your risk of heart disease and diabetes and is the key to sustainable weight loss. Low GI foods don't break down in the intestines as quickly as the high GI ones. Therefore, the sugar doesn't come in a rush, forcing blood sugar levels up. As



the low GI foods break down slower, the sugar is released more slowly, resulting in keeping energy levels balanced and helping you feel fuller for longer between meals.

Low GI diets help people lose and control weight, increases the body's sensitivity to insulin, improves diabetes control, helps reduce the risk of heart disease, reduces blood cholesterol levels, prolongs physical endurance, helps re-fuel carbohydrate stores after exercise and can help you manage the symptoms of polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS).

**Low GI Foods** are oats e.g. porridge or natural muesli, multi-grain bread, wholemeal pasta, low-fat milk and yoghurt, most fruit, sweet corn, sweet potato, legumes and some rice varieties.



## Coeliac Disease

Coeliac disease is a common bowel condition that is caused by intolerance / immune response to a protein called gluten. Gluten is found in wheat, rye and barley

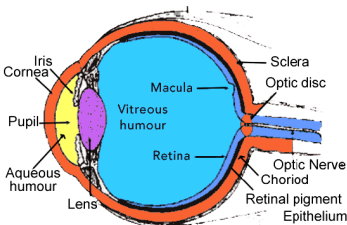


and possibly oats, which are often used to make foods such as bread, pasta and biscuits. Some of the more common symptoms include: tiredness, intermittent diarrhoea, abdominal pain or cramping, indigestion, flatulence, bloating and weight

loss. People of all ages can be affected, but symptoms only appear after gluten has been introduced into the diet. Sometimes a stressful event, such as an infection, injury, or surgery, will trigger symptoms of coeliac disease.

There is no cure for coeliac disease, but the symptoms can be kept under control by eating a strict gluten-free diet. However, coeliac disease that is untreated or undiagnosed can cause several different complications. People with coeliac disease need to stick to the gluten-free diet for the rest of their lives to prevent further inflammation. For further advice contact the [Coeliac Society of SA](#) on telephone 8336 1476

## Glaucoma



Glaucoma is the name for a group of eye conditions in which the optic nerve is damaged at the point where it leaves the eye. This nerve carries information from the light sensitive layer in your

eye, the retina, to the brain where it is perceived as a picture.

Glaucoma has been nicknamed the "sneak thief of sight" because the loss of visual field often occurs gradually over a long time and may only be recognized when it is already quite advanced. Once lost, this damaged visual field can never be recovered. Worldwide, it is the second leading cause of blindness.

Glaucoma affects one in two hundred people aged fifty and younger, and one in ten over the age of eighty. Early detection and treatment will usually prevent or slow down further damage by glaucoma

Treatments usually include prescription eyedrops and / or surgery, and can effectively stop or slow the progression of the disease.

Contact RAH's [The Glaucoma Service at the Central Northern Ophthalmology Network](#) on 8222 2729

## Vision Health & Safety Information Sessions

Why not come along to this fast paced, informative session on eye health and safety provided by B&K Vision.



Mawson Lakes, Friday	03 April 2009	2pm,	P1-09
City West, Monday	06 April 2009	2pm,	H6-03
City East, Thursday	16 April 2009	2pm,	BJ2-32
Magill, Wednesday	22 April 2009	2pm	H1-05
101 Currie St, Friday	24 April 2009	2pm	AU3-03
Whyalla, Thursday	30 April 2009	10am	Room 5

Please email [Pamela Werchon](#) to reserve a seat at the Adelaide sessions and [Janet Estepa](#) for Whyalla session.

## Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease (PD) belongs to a group of conditions called motor system disorders, which are the result of the loss of dopamine-producing brain cells. The four primary symptoms of PD are tremor, or trembling in hands, arms, legs, jaw, and face; rigidity, or stiffness of the limbs and trunk; bradykinesia, or slowness of movement; and postural instability, or impaired balance and coordination. As these symptoms become more pronounced, patients may have difficulty walking, talking, or completing other simple tasks. PD usually affects people over the age of 50.

Early symptoms of PD are subtle and occur gradually. In some people the disease progresses more quickly than in others. As the disease progresses, the shaking, or tremor, which affects the majority of PD patients may begin to interfere with daily activities. Other symptoms may include depression and other emotional changes; difficulty in swallowing, chewing, and speaking; urinary problems or constipation; skin problems; and sleep disruptions.

There are currently no blood or laboratory tests that have been proven to help in diagnosing sporadic PD. Therefore the diagnosis is based on medical history and a neurological examination. For further information / support contact [Parkinson's SA Inc](#) on 8357 8909

Please visit our webpage and view previous [OHSW & IM Newsletters](#)