

Don't Rake-In the Back Pain

Before you reach for your rake, consider the possible consequences: back strain, neck strain and pain in the shoulders.

Just as playing football or golf can injure your body, the twisting, turning, bending, and reaching of mowing and raking can also cause injury if your body is not prepared. Like an athlete, if you leap into something without warming up, the chances of injury are greater



Tips to Avoid Injury

- Do stretching exercises, without bouncing, for 10 to 15 minutes during the course of your work. Do knee-to-chest pulls, trunk rotations, and side bends with hands above your head and fingers locked. Take a short walk to stimulate circulation. When finished, repeat the stretching exercises.
- Stand as straight as possible, and keep your head up as you rake.
- When raking, use a 'scissors' stance: right foot forward and left foot back,



reverse after a few minutes, putting your left foot forward and right foot back.

- Bend at the knees, not the waist, as you pick up piles of leaves. Make the piles small to decrease the possibility of back strain.

- Drink lots of water, and wear protective gear, such as a hat, long pants and gloves. If you have asthma or allergies, wear a mask.



- Try ergonomic tools. They're engineered to protect you when used properly. If you do feel soreness or stiffness in your back, use ice to soothe the discomfort. If there's no improvement in two or three days, see your doctor or chiropractor.