



## Health Tip: Good Gardening Techniques

Help protect your joints

(HealthDay News) -- Gardening is a relaxing activity and a great form of exercise. But all that bending, kneeling, digging and lifting can take a toll on your back, knees, wrists and other joints.

The American Occupational Therapy Association suggests these techniques to help prevent injury while gardening:

- Look for tools that have padded handles and grips to ease pressure on your hands and fingers.
- If you tend to get tired easily, get a kneeler seat. This should make it easier to stand up when you're done gardening.
- Don't lift a heavy bag of dirt or mulch. Break it up into smaller bags that are easier to carry, or dump smaller loads into a wheelbarrow or cart. Always lift with your legs, not your back.
- Look for lightweight hoses, and keep them near your garden so you don't have to carry them far.
- Don't do any one activity for too long. Keep changing positions -- kneeling, sitting, standing. And don't grip a tool for an extended period.

