

Toward Pain-Free Gardening

(NAPSA)—You can lessen the aches and pains that can come from growing a beautiful garden if you heed the advice of gardening expert and author Melinda Myers:

Smart Gardening

• **Vertical Gardening**—Garden up. Grow plants on a blank wall, fence or post. Height makes gardening easier and creates visual interest.

• **Choose Your Tools Wisely**—Look for ergonomic grips, long handles and ratcheted tools to keep your posture upright, give you more power and make the grip easier.

• **Leverage Heavy Loads**—Split up large loads into smaller increments. Use everyday items such as a wagon or winter sled to help you move supplies around.

• **Take Breaks**—Work five-minute breaks into your gardening schedule to lower your likelihood of injury. Try easy back bends from the waist and don't work for more than 20 to 30 minutes straight. Stay attentive to weather and flexibility: Do additional stretches or warm-ups if you feel stiff or cold.

• **Keep Tools Sharp**—File trowels, shears and shovels. Dull tools mean more strain.

After Gardening

If you follow all these tips and still wind up with back pain or you already have joint or low back pain, here are a few tips to alleviate acute pain:

- Heat and/or ice treatments
- Exercise, stretching techniques
- Visit a health care provider, such as a physical therapist or chiropractor, if after four weeks the pain has not lessened.

• Try over-the-counter medications such as Omron's 100 percent drug-free, nonprescription, electrotherapy pain relief unit. It can begin managing lower back pain, muscle and joint pain in about 15 minutes.

"As an avid gardener with two knee replacements, I'm always in search of alternative tactics to combat joint pain," said Myers. "Electrotherapy treatment lets me garden without needing to stop due to the joint pain that often comes with kneeling, reaching and lifting."

Electrotherapy Treatment

The unit uses Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS) technology to deliver gen-



Taking the aches and pains out of gardening may be easier than many people realize.

tle, massagelike pulses for on-the-spot pain relief. Electrotherapy is commonly used by physical therapists to treat muscle and joint pain.

"Electrotherapy has proven effective in physical therapy for more than 30 years," said Dr. Jeffery Mannheimer, a physical therapist on the forefront of electrotherapy research. "The effect of such therapy is immediate, repeatable and drug-free, making it an alternative choice for chronic and acute pain relief."

The unit is the first over-the-counter TENS product available nationally at major retail stores, including CVS, Walgreens, Rite Aid and other retailers in the pain products area, as well as online retailers such as Amazon.com, Drugstore.com, Walgreens.com and store.omronhealthcare.com.

The Great Garden Makeover Sweepstakes

To further help people reach their lifestyle goals, including enjoying gardening more, the company created the Great Garden Makeover Sweepstakes. Visit www.omronpainrelief.com/sweeps before June 22 and enter for a chance to win \$5,000 toward your dream garden, plus a one-hour free garden consultation with Myers. Additional prize packs, which will be given away weekly, include a pain relief unit, replacement pads and "Melinda's Garden Moments" DVD.

Learn More

For additional tips on gardening and managing lower back and joint pain, visit www.omronpainrelief.com. For further information, visit www.omronhealthcare.com.