

Back pain – is your age the problem?

There is an unfortunate belief that once you get a back problem in your 50's, 60's or beyond, that you're stuck with it and that it's simply a matter of old age and 'wear and tear'.

Since Shefford's Woodside clinic opened last June, the Clinic staff have been delighted by the number of local people whose back problems they've been able to help with osteopathy, physiotherapy and pilates, "But" says Jonathan Betser, one of the Clinic's Osteopaths, "many of the older generation are still under the impression that they're too old for their backache to be helped".

In the vast majority of cases, nothing would be further from the truth!! Shefford's 'sister' clinics in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard have been in existence for over twenty years and although they still see lots of young back pain sufferers, knee problems, shoulder injuries, whiplash problems etc., those working in the Clinics believe that the greatest service they can provide to the local communities is by helping elderly sufferers of 'wear and tear conditions', spondylosis and arthritis to keep active and mobile.

Osteopathy seems to be particular popular with such patients – in general such treatment will consist of controlled stretching, 'soft tissue' massage and gentle movements of the affected joints, all carried out in a way that's very specific to the individual needs and wants of each patient. It's important to realise that most of the pain that's suffered with such conditions usually relates to muscle spasm and inflammation, not damage to the surfaces of the affected bones - one reason why such problems can very often be helped !

Those attending should expect to see a benefit within the first treatment or two and, once they've improved sufficiently, an occasional 'top-up' treatment every four to six months is usually sufficient to maintain the situation.

According to Mr Betser, one of the first Osteopaths he worked under was a former Spitfire pilot who'd been severely injured when his parachute had failed to open properly – a truly inspirational man who was still able to continue practising into his 'late seventies' because, he claimed, of the regular treatment his osteopathic colleagues had provided!

Shefford's Woodside Clinic provides treatment for most conditions which relate to the 'wear and tear' of your joints. Information about Osteopathy, Physiotherapy, Pilates, Chiropody/Podiatry and a variety of complementary therapies is available by calling 01462 850229 (or see www.woodsidedclinic.co.uk).
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