

# Spinal health 'a priority'

## 37% of cases of back pains are related to occupational risks

TNA REPORTER

THE World Health Organisation said 37% of all cases of back pain were related to occupational risks.

In the light of World Spine Day tomorrow the theme is your back at work brings to the fore the importance of spinal health, especially in the workplace.

This is according to Dr Robert Delgado, a chiropractor and certified wellness practitioner, who said effective movement of the spine charges the brain and the brain controls the entire body.

Delgado is hosting workshops across the country including the province on how people can take care of their backs.

"In order to be truly well, spinal health must be a priority. When it comes to the spine, it is important to be proactive," he said.

He said every spinal joint had receptors called proprioceptors that send signals through the nervous system up to the brain.

"The brain uses these signals to assess where the body is in space."

While the brain controls and regulates the physiology and the emotions of the entire body, it does so mainly through electrical impulses, but it can only produce between 10-20% of its electrical energy, Delgado said.

He said the rest of its electricity was generated through movement, specifically the stimulation of proprioceptors that send electricity into the brain where it can then be used to sustain life in us. He said when our spines become stiff or misaligned our brains become deficient in this vital stimulus, which



**PRIORITISE:** In the light of World Spine Day tomorrow the theme is, your back at work brings to the fore the importance of spinal health, especially in the workplace. PICTURE: WORLDSPINEDAY.ORG

negatively affects mental and physical performance.

Delgado said physical, chemical and emotional stress caused areas of tension to develop in the spine.

"These stressors can include falls, sports injuries, desk work, car accidents, poor diet, anxiety and other emotional stressors."

Delgado provided the following tips for people to ensure their spines are

moving in a healthy way:

- Partake in spinal hygiene exercises daily that promote flexibility and strength. These include exercises like rotating your head side to side. Before starting any exercise routine, consult a health professional
- Reduce your physical, chemical and emotional stress by following a healthy lifestyle
- For every 30 minutes of desk work

sit for 20 minutes, stand for 8 minutes and move around for 2 minutes

- Increase the amount of movement in a day by parking further away, taking the stairs instead of the lift
  - It is a good idea for people to have their spinal alignment and movement checked by a chiropractor regularly.
  - Areas of spinal tension can often occur without any apparent symptoms
- zandisilel@thenewage.co.za*