

Wellness News

August 2025



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8 a.m.

\$20 member, \$25 guest,
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CHRONIC LOWER BACK PAIN

Three Common Causes (and Fixes)

Here we are in August with a few more months of gardening, outdoor chores, and hopefully staying active with recreational activities like golf, tennis, or pickleball. All this activity can lead to chronic low back pain, which affects almost everything we do. Here are three common causes of chronic lower back pain, and some options to reduce or eliminate it.

First, a lack of flexibility in the lower back and hamstrings. Lack of flexibility increases the risk of muscle strain. The more pliable our muscles are, the better they can withstand stress. Tight hamstrings are more prone to injury and inflammation. Because the hamstrings are innervated by the sciatic nerve, which has branches extending from the lower back, an injury to the hamstrings often leads to lower back pain. Ideally, we should stretch daily for 20 minutes, holding each stretch to the point of discomfort for 30 seconds.

Second, there can be an imbalance in strength between the abdominal muscles and the lower back muscles. Since both the abdomen and lower back support the weight of the upper body, weak abdominal muscles can cause the lower back to bear more load, increasing the risk of muscle strain in this area. If you're not currently engaging in any abdominal strengthening exercises, it's advisable to start with basic crunches. Begin with 2 or 3 sets of 8–10 repetitions.

Third, poor posture. When we habitually roll our shoulders forward, the muscles in our lower back that support the spine become disengaged. To keep those muscles actively engaged, try lifting your chest a couple of inches and pulling your shoulders back a few inches; you'll notice your back muscles engaging. Whether you're sitting at your desk or participating in physical activities, it's important to remain aware of your posture.

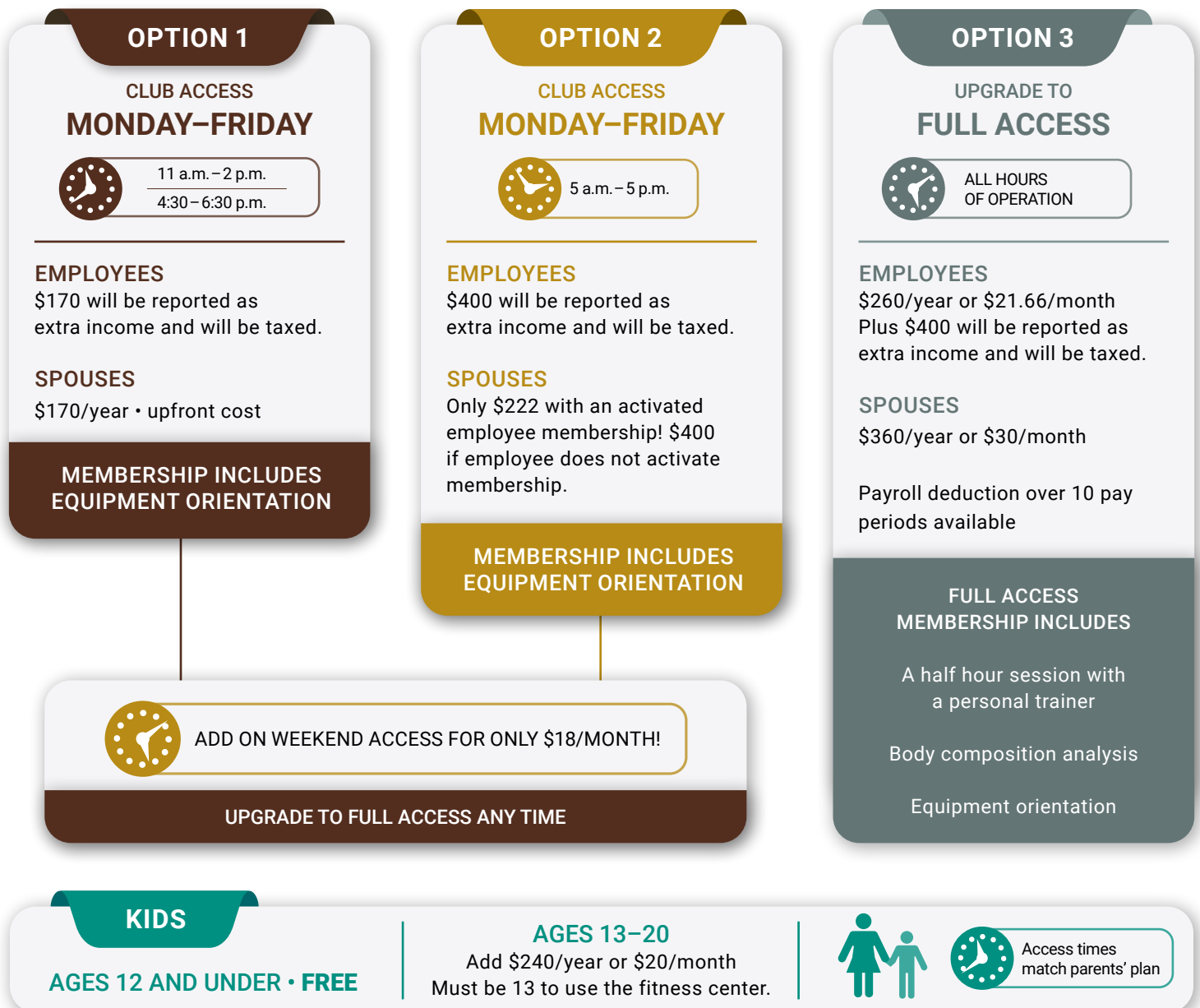


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Every full-time WMU employee has a membership at West Hills Athletic Club, all you have to do is activate it! Your membership is redeemable as a taxable benefit. For questions or to schedule a tour, please call (269) 387-0410.



For questions or to set up a tour of West Hills Athletic Club, please call (269) 387-0410.

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