

# Health & Fitness



## Ask The Trainer

Your questions answered  
by fitness expert Chris LaLanne,  
BS, CSCS, CrossFit

**Q:** Recently, my wife and I were up late watching television and became interested in a piece of exercise equipment that promised to take inches off your waistline in a matter of weeks and it seems like it actually works! We both want to lose weight, especially around the mid-section. Can this product help us reach our goals?  
—Mark

**A:** Hello Mark, Hopefully you haven't purchased this product since writing, as you may have fallen prey to the "advertising sharks" who lurk in the wee hours of late-night cable TV pushing their phony products. Your desire to "get results" may have been capitalized on by the deceptive marketing tactics the media uses.

As a well-respected name in the fitness field, it is my obligation to speak the truth. When it come to exercise and weight loss, there is no easy way out.

These sil[icon] product manufacturers take advantage of consumers who are in search of the "quick fix." This leads me to believe that the infomercial is banking on your ignorance and willing to bet that "we" don't know any better.

I'm sorry to tell you that results can only be earned through hard work. Consistent vigorous physical activity and healthy food choices are the only way to decrease your body fat percentage. The unfortunate truth is that 99.9 percent of the equipment with catchy names like; Ab Lounge,

Ab Roller, Ab Rocker, Ab Doer, Ab Swing and Ab Rocker will do no more for your "ABS" than regularly walking your dog like you should be.

These devices always promise to take fat off your belly, a phenomenon known as "spot reduction." Were this the case, I would be the world's greatest trainer and we would all have a six-pack.

Save your money, go for a jog and start lifting weights most days of the week. If you are unsure where to start, seek the help of a qualified fitness trainer and remember what uncle Jack always says, "Exercise is King, Nutrition is Queen, put them together and you have a Kingdom."

Consult with your doctor before beginning any intensive training program.

*Chris LaLanne, grand nephew of Jack LaLanne, is a Castro Valley resident with more than 10 years of experience in the fitness, nutrition and health field. Chris can be heard every Monday at 9 a.m. on JACK LALANNE LIVE, an Internet radio show produced by Voice America Health and Wellness Network, where he is co-host with Jack and Elaine LaLanne. For more information visit: [www.lalannefitness.blogspot.com](http://www.lalannefitness.blogspot.com).*

*Email fitness questions to: [lalannefitness@gmail.com](mailto:lalannefitness@gmail.com) and Chris will answer your questions in a future column.*

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## A Healthy Back, Now In a Book

By Emma Krasov  
CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

**I**f your doctor is something like the one I recently consulted, he/she would tell you that back pain is the most natural thing simply because humans started walking on their hind legs too soon.

Pendo Press, based at Stanford, seems to disagree, starting its series "Remember When It Didn't Hurt" with a book on natural posture by local author Esther Gokhale.

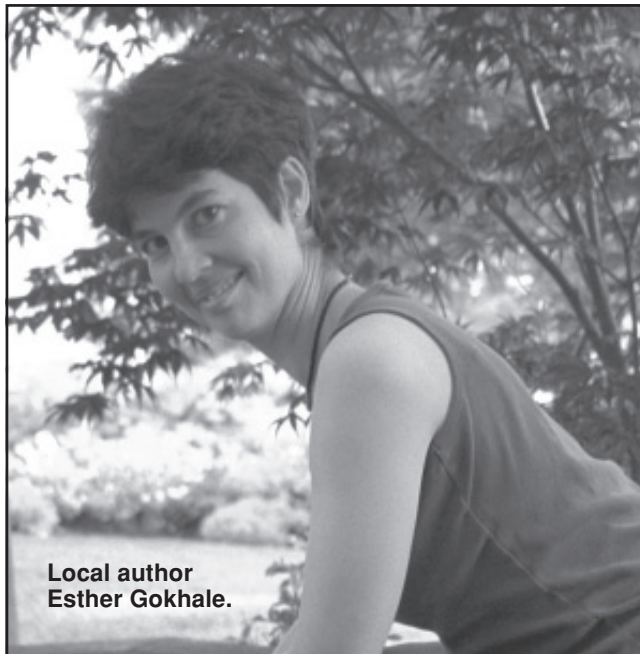
For her "Eight Steps to a Pain-Free Back" Gokhale traveled as near as her own daughter's playpen, and as far as Burkina Faso and Thailand to learn how a healthy, never-hurting back is supposed to be carried.

In her book, Gokhale provides well-illustrated and easy to learn handy lessons on how to stand, sit, walk, and sleep to maintain a pain-free spine.

The author has been involved in therapies all her life. As a young girl growing up in India, she helped her mother, a registered nurse, treat abandoned babies waiting to be adopted.

Gokhale studied biochemistry at Harvard and Princeton, and acupuncture in San Francisco.

After an unsuccessful back surgery, she decided to take the matter in her own hands, spending years in Brazil, India, and around the world developing the



Local author  
Esther Gokhale.

Gokhale Method for treating back pain.

This method proved to be helpful and easily accessible for so many people, that it finally was reflected in her book which offers some breakthrough techniques for pain-free living.

Gokhale starts with asking why the epidemic of back pain has been largely confined to adults in industrialized societies with high standards of living.

Using history and anthropology, she brings examples of key factors that have led to unhealthful posture, culminating in the 1920s fashion that encouraged a tucked pelvis and habitual slouching.

To show how far we are now from the ideal, she analyzes over a thousand of photographs of naturally fit young children, and of adults who live in countries where carrying a load on one's head is a regular way of delivering goods.

resources, the method does not require any special equipment, physical exercises, expertise in Yoga or Pilates, or changes in diet and daily routine.

Instead, each step is designed to integrate easily into everyday life and help us all learn how to better drive, sit in a meeting, stand in line, work in front of a computer, or bend over to pick up a bag of groceries.

"A moderate amount of excess weight need not cause serious musculoskeletal problems," says Gokhale in her book. "It is when an individual lacks good alignment that even a small amount of extra weight can be disproportionately damaging because it torques the spine."

Step by step, the book teaches how to adopt a healthy posture and make it natural even for a hard-core sloucher, who spends large amounts of time sitting by the office desk, commuting, or playing a couch potato for recreation.

To order the book, call Independent Publishers Group at 800-888-4741 or you can visit: [ipgbook.com](http://ipgbook.com)

Then the book guides the reader through a series of simple changes in posture. Lessons on movement and resting involve the use of muscles to decompress the spine and protect the joints.

Those who use the Gokhale Method say that the relief is fast and long-lasting.

Unlike most other back-pain

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