

Back Pain

Minor Injury Unit



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1. Back Care

- a) Remember, good back care equals a healthy back.
- b) Ensure that when you lift or pick anything up you keep a straight back and bend the knees.
- c) Always try to keep the object that you are lifting as close to you as possible.
- d) Even picking up a pen from the floor requires you to bend your knees.
- e) When picking up an object try to contract/ brace the abdominal muscles, this will support the spine.
- f) Remember poor technique performed repeatedly will cause back pain.

2. Exercise

This is very important for anybody who wishes to maintain a healthy back. There is overwhelming evidence to show that moderate exercise will be of great benefit. It will strengthen the muscles and joints around the spine. Attempt to build up your tolerance to exercise by starting with small amounts and increasing gradually.

Good exercise includes walking, swimming, cycling, gym, Pilates, yoga, tai-chi and exercise classes. It is common to experience some discomfort when exercising because some muscles may not have worked in this way for a while, this is quite normal.

Getting the back moving is very important. Try to do the following exercises little and often during the day

- Crawling position. Pull your stomach in.
- Lying on your back on the floor with a cushion under your head. Support your legs on a chair keeping hips and knees at right angles.
- Relax your back in this position for 20 mins.
- Lying on your back with your knees together and bent. Slowly roll your knees from side to side keeping your upper trunk still.
- Lying with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Lift your knees towards your chest. Place your hands behind both knees and draw them towards your chest.



3. Pacing

An example of this is to spread the household chores over the day/ week rather than trying to achieve everything in one morning/day. This means having regular rest and active periods. Rest periods should be in a comfortable pain relieving position for your spine. Activity may increase your back pain a little, which is fine, however too much activity will cause too much pain and will cause you to rest for too long. This cycle is to be avoided as much as possible. Therefore, you must find a happy medium between rests and activity.

4. Positions of Comfort

It is important to rest your back in your most comfortable position, eg:

a) On your back with your knees bent (ie, with a pillow under your knees).

Or

b) On your side with affected leg up and bent or on your tummy over one/ two pillows.

5. Pain Relief

The following may be used to try and give relief:

a) Hot water bottle (wrapped in a towel). Lay over for as long as needed.

b) Running a warm shower jet over the affected area.

c) Ice – Frozen peas wrapped in a towel and place on the back

d) Anti – inflammatory tablets may also help seek advice from your GP/ pharmacist.

For further information visit

www.nhs.uk/conditions/back-pain/

www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/lower-back-pain-exercises/

If you need further advice you can telephone 111

Contact us [if not included elsewhere]

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