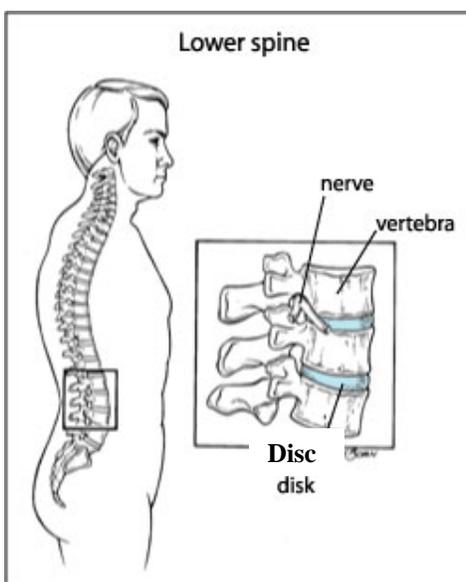


LOW BACK PAIN: Tips on Pain Relief and Prevention

What causes low back pain?

Most Americans will have low back pain at some time in their lives. Complaints usually start as a pain or ache in the lower back or bottom area. The pain may also be felt in the leg or even in the foot. Pain may come on suddenly after an injury or gradually with no injury. Pain can be caused by muscle strains, damage to the disc between your bones in your back, or damage to other tissues in your back. Exactly what is injured varies from person to person, and doctors aren't always sure what exactly may be causing your pain.

Not all back pain is due to injury. Many cases are due to bad posture and too much strain on your back muscles. If your muscles or ligaments are the cause of the pain, you should feel better soon because these tissues heal quickly, as long as you avoid positions/postures that make your back hurt.



Do I need an X-Ray?

Most times, an X-Ray is not helpful for back pain. If your pain is present for several weeks, your doctor may order a CT scan or an MRI scan. These are more likely to be helpful, as they show the soft structures of the spine, as well as the bone. Rarely, your doctor will need to take blood or other tests to look for causes of your back pain.

How can I get rid of my back pain?

Most back pain will get better on its own. Stay as active as you can and try to avoid staying in bed during the day. Taking simple painkillers such as ibuprofen or Tylenol can help. If you are pregnant, talk to your doctor before taking any medications. Also, hot or cold packs may give some relief.

Regular exercise to keep fit is very important for having a healthy back. Being aware of posture and positions you are in during your daily activities can help prevent back pain. If you have had a problem with your back in the past, you are more likely to have problems in the future if you do not take care of your back. Lift heavy objects by bending your knees instead of bending over to lift the object. Also

PM – DP Pain Management – Disease Process
PM – TE Pain Management – Tests
PM – EX Pain Management - Exercise

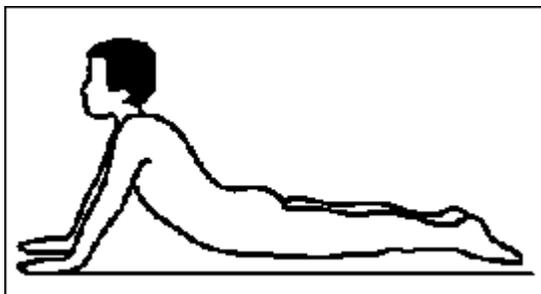
avoid repetitive heavy lifting when possible. When you do need to lift heavy objects, share the load with other people and try to hold the weight in close to your body.

What is the best way to sit?



Sit upright with your head facing forward. Try to sit in a chair that has a back support. Keep your knees a little higher than your hips. Keep your shoulders relaxed and avoid a rounded back. Use a small pillow or towel roll behind your lower back when sitting or driving for a long time. Try to not sit for too long. Take frequent standing breaks.

What exercises can I do to help the pain and keep it from coming back?



Lie on your stomach with your hands under your shoulders. Straighten your elbows and push the top half of your body up as far as pain permits. Keep your hips, pelvis, and legs relaxed. Hold 3 seconds, repeat 10-15 times. Good to do 1st and last thing in the day while you're in bed.



Lie down on your back. Bend one leg and keep other leg straight. Tighten your stomach muscles. Slowly lift straight leg until as high as opposite knee. Hold 3 seconds then lower slowly back to start. Repeat 10 times on each leg.



Place hands on hips, arch backward to make hollow of back deeper. Lean back as far as you can. Repeat 10-15 times every 2 hours or after lifting or prolonged sitting.

If your pain increases with any exercise, stop and consult your doctor or physical therapist