Eliminate and Prevent Back Pain





Prevent, Fix, and Eliminate
your
Back Pain

Also Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Back Pain.

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15 Tips to Prevent Back Pain

- **1. Get more exercise.** If your back is hurting, you may think the best way to get relief is to limit exercise and to rest. A day or two of rest may help, but more than that may actually increase your pain. Experts now know that physical activity helps ease inflammation and muscle tension by keeping blood and nutrients flowing to the affected area. When you exercise, always start with warm ups (below) and end with stretches (below).
- **2. Watch your weight.** Extra pounds, especially in your midsection, can make back pain worse by shifting your center of gravity and putting strain on your lower back. Staying within 10 pounds of your ideal weight will help control back pain.
- **3. If you smoke, stop.** Smokers are 30% more likely to suffer from back pain. Because nicotine restricts the flow of nutrient-containing blood to spinal discs, smokers are especially vulnerable to back pain.
- **4. Sleeping position.** If you're prone to back pain, talk with your doctor about the best sleeping position. Sleeping on your side with your knees pulled up slightly toward your chest is sometimes suggested. Prefer to sleep on your back? Put one pillow under your knees and another under your lower back. Sleeping on your stomach can be especially hard on your back. If you can't sleep any other way, lay on a pillow on one side of your body. No matter how you sleep, a firm mattress is probably best. To firm up a soft mattress, you can place a half-inch-thick plywood board underneath.
- **5.** Pay attention to your posture. For Standing: Focus on keeping your ears, shoulders and hips in a straight line, hold your head up and tuck in your stomach.
- **6. Have good Computer Posture & Work Ergonomics** For Sitting: The best chair for preventing back pain is one with a straight back or low-back support. Keep your knees a bit higher than your hips while seated. Prop your feet on a stool if you need to. Make your work space back friendly. Don't sit hunched over your desk for hours on end without any breaks to stretch and move.
- **7. Be careful how you lift.** Don't bend over to lift heavy objects. Bend your knees and squat, pulling in your stomach muscles and holding the object close to your body as you stand up. Don't twist your body while lifting. If you can, push rather than pull heavy objects. Pushing is easier on the back. If it is heavy, get someone to help!
- **8. Avoid high heels.** They can shift your center of gravity and strain your lower back. Stick to a one-inch heel. If you have to go higher, bring along a pair of low-heeled shoes and slip into them if you become uncomfortable.
- **9. Strengthen your "Core"** this includes your back and pelvis, not just your abs.
- **10. Lighten your wallet.** Sitting on an overstuffed wallet may cause discomfort and back pain. If you're going to be sitting for a prolonged period -- while driving, for example, take your wallet out of your back pocket or carry your wallet in your front pocket.
- **11. Correct Handbags and other bags.** To lighten the load, periodically purge bags, cases, backpacks, and other carriers of things you don't need. It is recommended that your handbag should not exceed 1-2 pounds. Try getting a smaller, yet still fashionable purse or wristlet, which will force you to trim down the things you carry with you. Also, try to carry the purse on both shoulders evenly, instead of always carrying it on one side. Crossing the strap across your body will also help distribute the weight more evenly. Backpacks should be used with both shoulders and not exceed 10% of the person's body weight.
- **12. Forget about back braces.** Various back supports are available, from elastic bands to special corsets. They can be helpful after certain kinds of surgery, but there is not much evidence that they help treat chronic back pain. By immobilizing and thus weakening back muscles, back braces may actually aggravate back pain.
- **13. Warm up before exercise.** Cold Muscles are tighter and have a larger chance of pulling or straining them. Marching in place, Jumping Jacks, arm swings, and non weighted lunges are great examples of dynamic warm ups.
- **14. Stretch tight muscles.** Tight muscles will not let you move correctly putting stress on the joints and muscles leading to injuries. Static stretches should be held for 30 sec. 1 min. and not be painful. They should be done after exercise and not before.
- **15. Keep your Joints moving.** Chiropractic adjustments are about finding joints not moving correctly (misaligned), and getting them moving correctly. "Good" Yoga can help keep the joints moving. (Yoga done incorrectly can easily lead to injury.) (visit our <u>website</u> for more information about chiropractic adjustments)

Dietary Recommendations to Reduce Pain

Consume more of these foods:



<u>Fruits and Vegetables-</u> These foods make our bodies more alkaline and are loaded with antioxidants and vitamins. Our bodies function better in an alkaline (basic) environment. Natural foods such as fruits and vegetables will make our bodies more alkaline while many processed foods will make us more acidic. Acidity is linked to increased pain sensation, so while you are in acute pain avoiding acidic foods is essential. Most Americans diets are deficient in fruits and vegetables. It is recommended that we eat at least 9 servings of fruits and vegetables. Failure to do this may result in vitamin deficiency that can lead to various conditions. When cooking vegetables, heat destroys vitamins, so light heat is preferred to get the maximum benefits from them. Try for 2x as much vegetables as to fruits.

Having a variety (rainbow) of colors helps make sure you are getting all important antioxidants and nutrients.

Omega 3 Fats- These are good fats that our bodies need to be healthy. Olive oil, fish, free range chicken, free range eggs, meats that are free range or vegetarian fed are good sources of Omega 3s. These have an anti-inflammatory effect on your body. (Discussed later on.)

<u>Spices-</u> Ginger, Turmeric, Capsaicin, Chili Powder, Curry Powder, all have an anti-inflammatory effect on your body and should be used liberally in your food. These are also quite tasty.

Green Tea- Green tea is a great source of antioxidants, and is also alkaline

Foods to avoid:

<u>Acidic Foods-</u> Acidic foods include soft drinks, white flour, pastries, sweets, pasta, milk, ice cream, alcohol, vegetable oils (fried foods) and artificial sweeteners such as NutraSweet, Equal Aspartame, and Sweet 'N Low.

Omega 6 Fats- Are found in foods such as vegetable oil, fried foods, fast food, pasta, white flour, and breads. These are converted into pro-inflammatory eicasonoids. These chemicals cause pain sensitization in your tissues. Consuming these fats makes your pain feel worse once you have an injury!!!

<u>Processed Foods-</u> Are devoid of vitamins and nutrients, contain unhealthy preservatives and artificial flavorings, and coloring. You should try to eat fresh foods and avoid fast food and ready made meals.

<u>Simple Sugars</u>- Simple Sugars (sugar white flour, etc.) are processed foods and are very inflammatory. Try to get most of your carbohydrates from your fruits and vegetables. You can add brown rice and a small portion of whole grains.

Supplements

The bottom line is that the food we eat has a direct effect on how much pain we feel. Following these dietary recommendations will change your biochemistry over time. Food supplements are an excellent to make changes to your body's biochemistry quickly. It is important to make the changes outlined in your diet, but the effects of changing diet alone will take time. Supplements can make you feel better in a much shorter amount of time, and after symptoms are relieved, eating a healthy diet is the best way to prevent recurrences. Supplements are meant to enhance a healthy diet, not replace one. Your doctor will choose the supplements that are best for you and your condition. Listed below are some supplements that have a positive effect on pain.

<u>-Multivitamin</u>- Research is accumulating that shows that taking a daily multivitamin decreases the risk of cancer, heart disease, inflammatory disease, cataracts, depression, and the list goes on. It is recommended that we eat 9 servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Take into account that 80% of children and adolescents and 70% of adults do not eat 5 servings of fruit and vegetables per day. Taking a multivitamin is good insurance to help prevent these diseases because our diets are not always perfect.

<u>-Fish Oil-</u> This product is rich in anti-inflammatory omega 3 fatty acids. Supplementing with Omega 3 fatty acids displaces the pro-inflammatory omega 6 fatty acids that are overabundant in our typical American diet. We should be eating foods that have an omega 6 to omega 3 ratio of 1:1 to 4:1. Common foods such as potato chips, and corn oil have ratio's of 60:1. By supplementing with omega 3 fatty acids and eating an anti-inflammatory diet, you can correct your omega 6 to omega 3 ratio. A diet deficient in omega 3 and high in omega 6 fats can increase inflammation and increase risk of the following pathologies; arthritis, headaches, osteoporosis, asthma, menstrual cramps, cancer, colitis, heart disease, and thrombotic stroke. Supplementing with omega 3 fatty acids has shown to decrease pain associated with arthritis. Normal joint cartilage has low levels of pro-inflammatory omega 6 fatty acids, but as we age and eat foods high in omega 6 fatty acids, the concentration increases, putting our joints at risk of becoming arthritic and painful. Supplementing with omega 3 fish oils can prevent this process from occurring. **WARNING:** Fish oil should not be taken if you are taking coumadin, warfin, or other blood thinning/anticoagulant medications.

<u>Magnesium-</u> Studies have shown that when we are magnesium deficient, the nervous system becomes hyperexcitable. In a hyperexcitable state, pain sensations become more intense, and the body expresses more inflammation than necessary when healing injured tissues. This explains why some people will recover more quickly and with less pain than others. Magnesium is also involved in every aspect of DNA repair and synthesis, as well as basically all metabolic pathways. Magnesium deficiency is associated with atherosclerosis, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, stroke, kidney disorders, osteoporosis, diabetes, headaches, and asthma.

<u>Vitamin D-</u> Research supports Vitamin D supplementation for musculoskeletal pain, Type II diabetes, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, syndrome X, chronic low back pain, multiple sclerosis, depression, and prevention of cancer. It is estimated that 50,000-70,000 Americans die from cancer each year due to insufficient vitamin D.

<u>Anti-inflammatory Herbs-</u> These include, Turmeric, Ginger, Boswellia, Rosemary, and Lemon bioflavonoid All are anti-inflammatory herbs that have been used for thousands of years in Asia. Ginger and turmeric have been shown to reduce pain associated with osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and general musculoskeletal pain.

<u>Bromelain-</u> is a enzyme found in fresh pineapple and has studies showing better results than most non inflammatory medicines and without their side effects.

Basic Rules for a Healthy Diet

- 1. Drink a <u>minimum</u> of 8 glasses of water per day. For every glass of coffee, tea or soda you drink add an extra glass of water.
- 2. Eliminate all processed and refined carbohydrates (including, but not limited to, white breads, muffins, cookies, candies, crackers, pasta, white rice, and most baked goods)
- 3. 60% of daily food consumption should be raw vegetables and fruits. This is one area where most everybody can improve their diet, and it is extremely important. Always looks for a variety, although make the green, leafy type (spinach, chard, beet greens, kale, broccoli, mustard greens, etc.) your first choice. Raw is preferred with lightly steamed or sautéed as your second choice. When eating salads, try not to eat iceberg lettuce, rather use lettuces with a rich green color (baby spinach, romaine, etc.). Do not substitute fruit juice, which is loaded with sugar, for fruit. When eating fruit limit the sweetest fruits/tropical fruits. Better choices include: Apples, Berries, Grapes, Papaya, Pears, and Prunes.
- 4. 30% of daily food consumption is animal products (beef, chicken, turkey, lamb, fish, eggs, etc.) and concentrated foods (raw nuts, seeds, cooked beans and legumes).
- 5. 10% of food consumption consists of whole grains and breads
- 6. Consume smaller, more frequent meals:

Try to eat every 2 to 4 hours. Snack between meals, if necessary.

Good Snack Choices: fruits, nuts (almonds, cashews, walnuts, macadamias), whole food health bars (Standard Process), and non-processed cheeses.

- 7. Do not overeat, and eat only when hungry
- 8. Chew food thoroughly until liquid
- 9. Do not use any oils except extra virgin olive oil unless raw and unrefined (will be stated on label). Avoid any foods with hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils. Always choose butter over margarine.
- 10. Avoid processed lunch meat; use chicken, turkey, roast beef, etc.
- 11. Bake, broil, roast, boil, and eat meats rare to medium rare. Do not overcook meat!
- 12. Avoid frying.
- 13. Avoid products that contain refined sugar (glucose, fructose, sucrose, corn sweetener, etc.). Use raw honey and Stevia in small amounts as sweeteners.
- 14. Limit pasteurized dairy products especially milk, which has been shown to be detrimental for many people. *Plain* yogurt is an excellent source of essential nutrients and vitamins.
- 15. Limit regular coffee, tea, wine, and beer. If you enjoy wine or beer, follow these guidelines; drink only with meals; red wine is more beneficial than white wine. One glass of wine (preferably red) and two cups of regular coffee are acceptable per day. Because coffee and alcohol force you to lose water, you will have to drink more water to compensate.
- 16. Eliminate canned products except tuna in spring water.
- 17. Eliminate carbonated beverages, especially diet and regular soda.

Menu Suggestions

Day 1

Breakfast

2-3 egg omelet with your favorite vegetables and/or non-processed cheese Tea/Vegetable juice

Lunch

Tuna/Chicken Salad on whole wheat bread Piece of fruit or mixed salad

Dinner

Steak (remember do not overcook)
Beans, Lentils, or your favorite vegetable (see list)
Large mixed salad

Day 2

Breakfast

Plain yogurt with your favorite fruit added (see list) Herbal tea

Lunch

Turkey roll ups:

* Prepare as follows: Fresh sliced turkey breast cold cuts. Lay out flat, spread with mustard or mayo and load up with sprouts, lettuce, chopped up carrots, broccoli, and cauliflower. Roll up and enjoy. Eat as many as you desire.

Dinner

Baked fish, seasoned with fresh herbs & butter Favorite vegetable, lightly steamed

Day 3

Breakfast

2 eggs, prepared as you desire, with bacon and/or sausage Side dish of fruit

Lunch

Roast beef/Turkey/Chicken breast on whole wheat bread Mixed salad

Dinner

Roast chicken

Baked sweet potato (with butter)

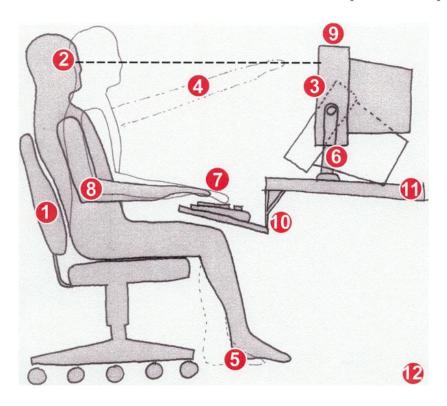
Favorite vegetable, lightly steamed

The above menus are just samples. Variety is endless.

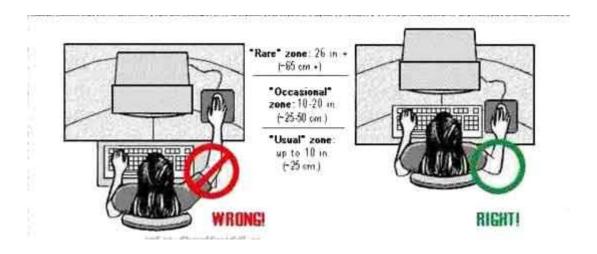
Invent your own menus and please share them with us.

- * Remember to snack between meals when hungry. Good snack choices include raw nuts, seeds, fresh fruit, whole food health bars (Standard Process), non-processed cheeses.
- * Remember to drink a minimum of 8 glasses of water per day

Computer Setup



- 1. Use a good chair with a good low back support but that has some give and sit back.
- 2. The eye-level should be about the same as the top of the monitor. This should give you approximately a 30 degree gaze downwards which is natural. You should be able to see the contents in the monitor without bending your neck.
- 3. No glare on screen, use an optical glass anti-glare filter where needed.
- 4. Sit at arm's length from monitor as a good viewing distance.
- 5. Feet on floor or stable footrest.
- 6. Use a document holder, preferably inline with the computer screen.
- 7. Wrists flat and straight in relation to forearms to use keyboard/mouse/input device.
- 8. Arms and elbows relaxed close to body.
- 9. Top of monitor casing 2-3" (5-8 cm) above eye level.
- 10. Use a moveable keyboard pull out tray with mouse platform.
- 11. Center monitor and keyboard in front of you.
- 12. Use a stable work surface and stable (no bounce) keyboard tray.



Health professionals now know that exercise, even if you are currently having pain, is good for your back. Shown below are some easy stretching back exercises to help you get out of pain and help keep you that way.

You should talk to your doctor before starting any exercise program. If any exercise significantly increases pain, Stop!!

Proper Technique is key. If you lose form with the exercises. Stop. Rest and then try again.



Natural Pain Relief and Wellness

Stretches

Static stretches (no bouncing) should be held for 30 sec. up to 1 min. at a time. Repeat 2-3x a day

Knees to Chest

Lay on your back.

Bring one knee or 2 knees up to your chest at a time and hold. You can use a towel to help grab the knee by putting it behind your knee and gripping the towel on each side.

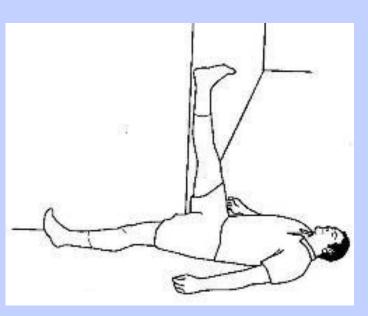


Hamstring Stretch

Tight hamstrings pull on the pelvis which stresses the low back. A standing hamstring stretch can sometimes put too much stress on the back. For this try a lying hamstring stretch.

Lie face up next to a outer corner of wall or doorway. Lift one leg and place it on the wall.

Make sure the knee that is on the wall is straight and not bent. Keep the leg/butt of the side not being stretched on the ground. Move your butt closer to the wall until you feel a good stretch in the back of the thigh, but it should not be painful.



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Hip Flexor Stretch

People often sit for most of the day with their hips flexed. This can tighten up the muscles that flex the hip and when you stand it will pull the low back forward, increasing the curve and stress on your back.

Kneel with one knee bent. (You can modify this by standing and using a bench or chair to place your (kneeling) knee on.) The knee that is down is the side you will be stretching.

Bring your pelvis forward, keeping your back upright and not leaning forward with it.



Low Back Rotation

Lie on your back with knees bent up and feet on the ground.

Keeping your neck and upper back on the ground, rotate your low back by bringing your knees to one side (left) and hold then move to the other side (right) and hold.



Complete Chiropractic 5930 Hamilton Blvd. #8 Allentown, PA 18106 Health professionals now know that exercise, even if you are currently having pain, is good for your back. Shown below are some easy stretching back exercises to help you get out of pain and help keep you that way.

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Natural Pain Relief and Wellness

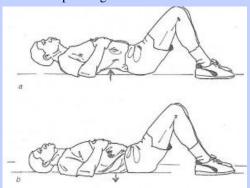
Strengthening

Strengthening exercises are typically held of 8-10 sec and movements are slow. Perform 2-3x daily. Proper form is a must!

Pelvic Tilts

Lie flat on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on floor. Rotate your hips counter clockwise, pushing your lower back flat onto the floor.

Imagine pulling a string from your belly button up to your chest while pressing the low back into the floor.

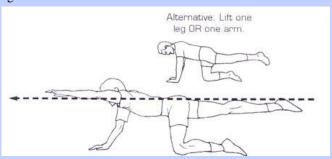


Moving the Pelvis like a clock counter-clockwise.



Rird Dog

Start on all fours. Lift opposite Arm and leg up, slowly. Back should stay in place. (If you put a book on your back, it should not fall off.) You can start with lifting just 1 arm or 1 leg.



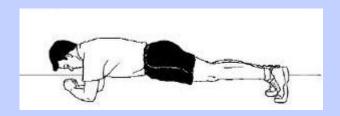
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Plank

Try having a mat or pillow underneath your elbows for comfort. Start on all fours with elbows on floor (or a mat). Lift your knees off the floor so your elbows and toes are the only thing touching the floor. (For easier version: keep knees on floor, but maintain straight torso.)

*** Concentrate on keeping straight in a line. If pelvis or low back dips or goes high, stop and rest and try again.***

This is a stamina exercise. Work your way up to increase time of exercise to 30 sec - 1 min.



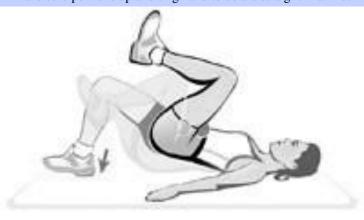
Cook Hip Lift

Works on Gluteal (Buttocks) Muscles.

Lie face up with knees bent and feet on ground. Bring one knee to your chest, then lift pelvis up so the thigh of the leg that is on the ground is parallel with your back.

Bringing 1 knee up while bridging helps isolate the gluteal region and lessen low back muscles which often get overworked.

** Make sure pelvis is up and thigh and torso are straight in a line.***



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Fixes to your Posture to help Prevent Pain

We all recognize the importance of getting our cars serviced regularly so that they run at their optimal level. Not surprisingly, the same is true of the human body. In fact, there is a very useful car-related analogy we can use when it comes to describing postural analysis: a front-end alignment and wheel balance.

When a vehicle's alignment is off, it manifests as uneven tread wear and loss of tire life. Likewise, when a car's tires are not properly balanced, ride quality is diminished, tire life is shortened, and bearings and shock-absorber performance suffers. When one's posture is off, the human body also experiences a range of problems: restricted range of motion; pain; organ dysfunction; and joint, tendon, ligament and muscle stress, to name a few.

Without even looking at you, I'm pretty sure you have a posture problem. That's because almost everyone I see has a posture problem, including myself. Before the industrial revolution ~350 years ago, we had a lot of variety in our daily activities. Most of us now sit and are at a computer all day or doing some other repetitive job. Our bodies developed for a more active lifestyle, not to be sitting all day.

The trouble isn't just that slumped shoulders make you resemble a Neanderthal. Over time, your poor posture takes a tremendous toll on your spine, shoulders, hips, and knees. In fact, it can cause a cascade of structural flaws (muscle tightness, weakness, and joint restrictions/subluxations) that result in acute problems, such as joint pain throughout your body, reduced flexibility, and compromised muscles.

But don't worry—posture can be improved.

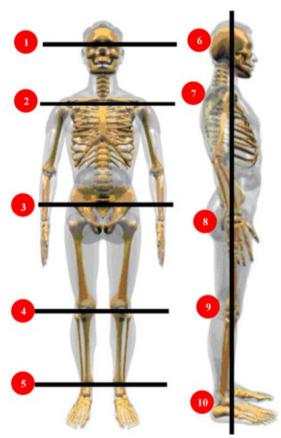
Analyze Your Alignment

Dress is non loose clothing. Spandex tights are not needed. Have a family member/friend or better yet a chiropractor or someone else trained to look at you. Better yet have them take a picture to show you. Have the look at from the side and from the front (or back) and have the compare to the picture below. Then see the following repair plans.

Click Link for printable pdf Posture Analysis - Complete Chiropractic - Allentown, Pa 18106

1-5 Assess if one side of you body is higher than the other: eyes, shoulders, hips, knees and ankles. Side to side should be even.

The Middle of your ear should be in line with 7 the middle of your shoulder, and 8 the middle of your hips which should be in line with the front of your 9 knees and 10 ankles



Common Postural Issues

Forward Head

Where pain strikes: Your neck and upper back

Fix it: Posterior Head Translations, Look at Computer

workstation setup. Computer Ergonomics

12 lb.

Fig. 1 - The 42 Pound Head

32 lb.

42 lb.

Elevated Shoulder

Where pain strikes: Neck and shoulders

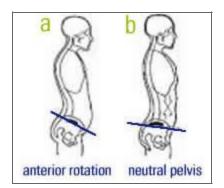
Fix it: Upper-trap stretch.

Rounded Shoulders

Where pain strikes: Neck, shoulder, or back

Fix it: Pectoral Stretch, Back Extension w// Shoulder blade squeeze, shoulder depression and posterior head transla-

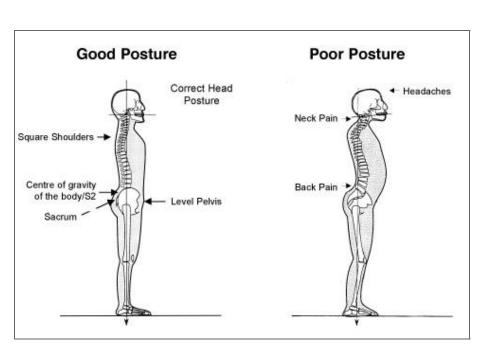
tion. Look at Computer workstation setup.

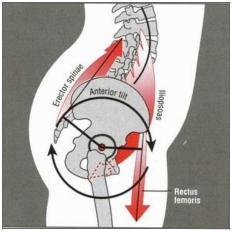


Anterior Pelvic Tilt

Where pain strikes: Lower back

Fix it: Hip Flexer Stretch, Cook's Hip Lift





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Anatomy & Info of the Low Back

Stats

- One-half of all working Americans admit to having back pain symptoms each year.
- Back pain is one of the most common reasons for missed work. In fact, back pain is the second most common reason for visits to the doctor's office, outnumbered only by upper-respiratory infections.
- Most cases of back pain are mechanical or non-organic—meaning they are not caused by serious conditions, such as inflammatory arthritis, infection, fracture or cancer.
- Americans spend at least \$50 billion each year on back pain—and that's just for the more easily identified costs. Experts estimate that as many as 80% of the population will experience a back problem at some time in our lives.

What Causes Back Pain?

The back is a complicated structure of bones, joints, ligaments and muscles. You can sprain ligaments, strain muscles, rupture disks, and irritate joints, all of which can lead to back pain. While sports injuries or accidents can cause back pain, sometimes the simplest of movements—for example, picking up a pencil from the floor—can have painful results. In addition, arthritis, poor posture, obesity, and psychological stress can cause or complicate back pain. Back pain can also, though vary rarely, directly result from disease of the internal organs, such as kidney stones, kidney

infections, blood clots, or bone loss.

Vertebrae are bones that protect your spinal cord. They can wear down or be forced out of potition (misaligned). Ligaments and muscles are supportive tissues that can be stretched, torn, or weakened Discs are shock absorbers that can bulge, rupture, or wear down. Nerves, which carry the body's messages, can be stretched, pinched, or irritated

Most back pain is gets classified as mechanical back pain, meaning that one or more of the several structures that allow your joints to move is causing the pain.

The back is a complex structure having muscles, tendons, cartilage, discs, joints, & nerves to name a few.

Vertebrae– provides bony structural support for the spine.

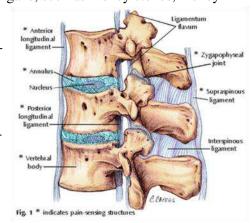
Disc-located between the vertebrae to help support and disperse forces. There are 2 parts of the disc: the annulus fibrosis and the nucleus pulposus. The annu-

lus is the outer part of the disc which is made of cartilage. The nucleus pulposus is a jelly-like substance in the middle of the disc.

Most disc injuries are caused by repetitive stress to the disc. This may happen due to improper lifting. The repetitive microtrauma causes small tears to occur in the outer part of the disc (annulus). The nucleus (the inner part of the disc) can then seep into the tears of the annulus. Eventually the small tears weaken the out part of the disc and the nucleus may bulge out and even break off. Sometimes this bulging of the disc can cause compression on the spinal nerve, causing pain into the leg with associated back pain.

Ligaments—there are various ligaments throughout the vertebral column which help support and stabilize the spine.

Muscles—the deep intrinsic muscles are small muscles that help stabilize the spine. The more superficial muscles are larger and provide larger movements.



Examples of Disc Problems



Nerves—provides sensory information and movement to the body. Spinal nerves exit between the adjacent vertebrae and the adjoining disc.

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- · Mini Exam

You will also have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have about chiropractic care

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Hours

Mon	9:00am	7:00pm
Tues	9:00am	7:00pm
Wed	9:00am	6:00pm
Thu	9:00am	7:00pm
Fri	9:00am	6:00pm
Sat	by ap- pointmen t only	
Sun	closed	

We will then let you know if we think chiropractic can help you.

Directions from to our office from Google

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