

Is Sports Massage the best option for lower back pain?

Sports massage is suitable for many conditions where muscle dysfunction is causing lower back pain. However, not all lower back pain is caused by muscle dysfunction. These are some signs and symptoms where you should first seek urgent advice from a doctor:

Severe pain: Sudden onset of severe central spinal pain which is relieved by lying down. Severe unremitting pain that remains when you are lying on your back at night.

Weakness or loss of sensation in both legs; You may struggle to extend the knee, twist the foot outward or point your toes up towards you. Perianal or perineal sensory loss (saddle anaesthesia or paraesthesia).

Problems with toileting: Recent-onset urinary retention (caused by bladder distension because the sensation of fullness is lost) and/or urinary incontinence (caused by loss of sensation when passing urine). Recent-onset faecal incontinence (due to loss of sensation of rectal fullness). Unexpected laxity of the anal sphincter.

A history of major trauma (such as a road traffic collision or fall from a height),

If you have a pre-existing condition which weakens your bones such as osteoporosis or steroid use and now have increased pain following a strenuous activity.

Possible infection: a fever and pain especially if you have a pre-existing condition which reduces your immunity.

If you have these symptoms then you should not book massage.

If you have none of these symptoms, then sports massage should be helpful to you. However, if you then see no symptomatic improvement after four to six weeks, then it is advisable to seek further medical advice.