

Top 10 tips for back pain

1. Exercise your back regularly – walking, swimming (especially back stroke) and using exercise bikes are all excellent to strengthen your back muscles but anything that you enjoy and helps you keep active will be beneficial.
2. Keep active and moving even when you have pain. Gentle walking and stretching will prevent stiffness. Also try to avoid long periods of bed rest as this is counterproductive.
3. Always lift and carry objects close to your body, bend your knees and your hips not your back and never twist and bend at the same time.
4. Try to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle as this will help prevent back pain. Quit smoking as it increases your chances of developing back pain.
5. Use painkillers when pain occurs to allow you to carry on being active. If pain is persistent see your GP as they may be able to prescribe stronger painkillers or investigate further.
6. Consider your work environment. If you work in an office look at your workspace and ways to adapt it to help you manage your back pain. If your work is more manual in nature try to be aware of and work according to health and safety procedures such as manual handling or loading procedures.
7. Try to carry loads in a rucksack and avoid carrying single sling bags.
8. Always try to maintain good posture. Avoid slumping in your chair, hunching over your desk and walking around with your shoulders hunched up.
9. Always use a chair with a back rest and sit with your feet flat on the floor or on a foot rest. Don't forget to change your sitting position every few minutes.
10. If you do suffer from back pain caused or made worse by being at work, talk to your employer or HR department. They may be able to help you come up with adaptations to your work environment, patterns and activities in order to help you better manage your back pain.



Information sheets made available by BackCare are provided for information only and should not be considered as medical recommendations or advice. Medical information is often controversial and continually changing. BackCare is not responsible for errors or omissions in the information. Some of the information may come from outside of the UK. This means for example, that some of the drug names may be different, and the sources of help quoted are not available in the UK. Please consult your GP or Specialist to discuss any specific concerns or if you are considering changing treatment in any way e.g. adding dietary supplements or different exercise routines.

© BackCare August 2009 Registered as the National Back Pain Association charity no 256751 **Helpline: 0845 1302704**