

3 SIMPLE SECRETS FOR **BACK PAIN**



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by

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BACK PAIN: Everyone's Got It

Pain in the back is very common and unfortunately, around 80% of adults will have some type of back pain at some point. However, there are different types of pain, usually it depends on the underlying causes of the pain.

Back pain tends to be unisex . . . that is, men and women are affected equally. It can affect everyone, but as you get older, you're more likely to suffer from back pain.

THERE ARE DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATIONS OF PAIN IN THE BACK:

ACUTE: This is pain that lasts anywhere from a day or two up to a couple of weeks. It doesn't end up affecting how you live your life and it resolves on its own. This type of pain is generally caused by a problem with the muscles, nerves, or intervertebral discs. This may occur due to an accident or a strain from lifting something the wrong way.

SUBACUTE: Back pain that lasts 4-12 weeks is classified as subacute and may be similar to acute pain, but it results from deeper damage. It takes longer to recover from, but in the end, most people manage to overcome the residual effects and return to their normal life.

CHRONIC: Chronic pain is ongoing and lasts longer than 12 weeks. It's often due to more permanent forms of damage and can involve the bones, muscles, or nervous system. It can be ongoing and somewhat mild, or it can be very painful and interfere with your daily life. Even after treating the cause of any acute pain, this back pain sticks around and continues to affect the patient.



Understanding How Your Back Works

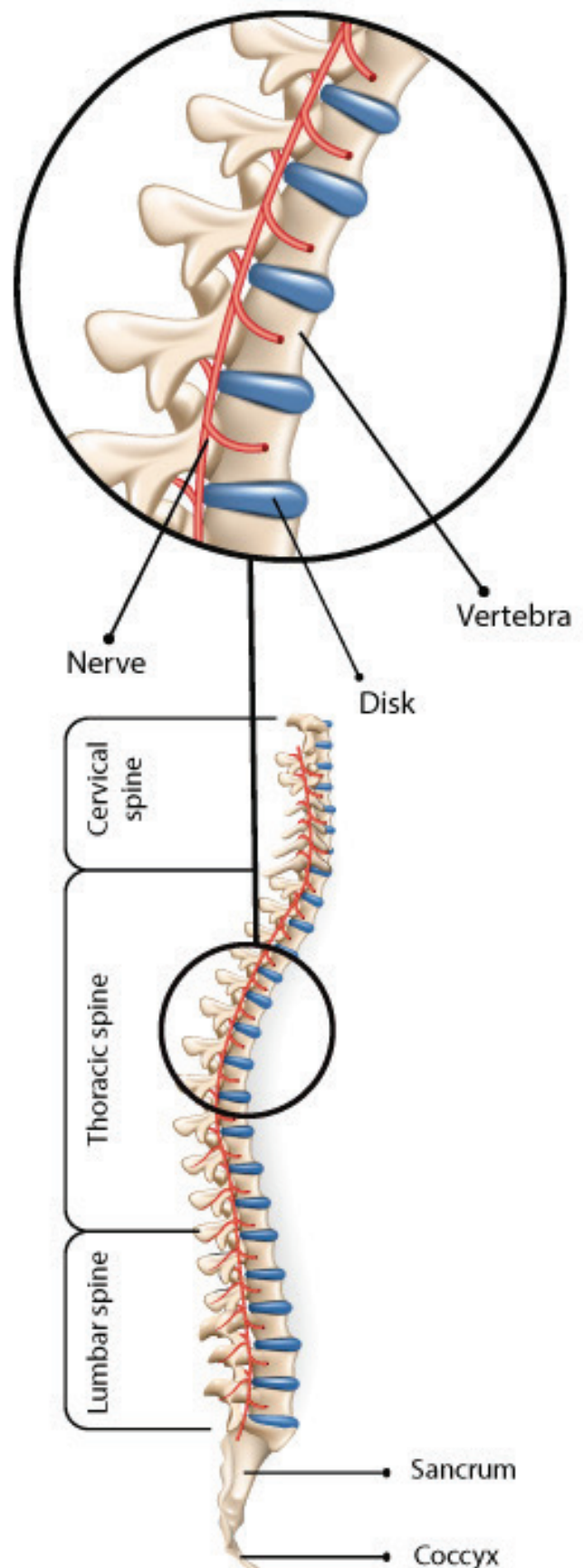
To understand back pain, you should have a good idea of how your back is made up and how it works. Most people know the basics, but do you know how all the pieces work together?

Your spine has 24 vertebrae, small bones that sit on each other in a stack. Between each of these is a disc to cushion the bone. Alongside the spine, you have ligaments and muscles, which help you move and flex the spine without everything falling apart. Your tailbone, at the bottom of the spine, is a solid section of fused bones. It doesn't have any discs at all.

Your spinal cord runs up the center of the spine, inside it, protected by the bones. The nervous system has a number of nerves that branch out from the spinal cord, reaching through the spaces between the vertebrae. There are also small facet joints on either side of the spine.

When you're young and in optimum condition, all the parts of your back work together to create a strong, functional body. However, there are a number of conditions and injuries that can affect the structures in your back and cause pain.

Aging is one of the biggest reasons for back pain. It's not necessarily the aging part that causes the pain, but it makes you more susceptible to injury. As you get older, your bones, ligaments, and even the discs can become weaker. The discs thin out, so the bones are closer to each other and this can



cause problems. It also becomes easier for the bones to be injured. You may experience osteophytes, or tiny bits of bone that form around the edges of the facet joints or vertebrae and can cause pain.

Injuries to the back or the spine becoming compressed can cause nerve damage. This is very painful. The most commonly known type of nerve pain is sciatica, which causes horrible pains shooting down the hip and leg. This is usually because a disc has bulged unusually and presses on a nerve. It's normal for your discs to bulge, since they're actually designed to do that in order to aid movement, but it can become a problem when that creates pressure on a nerve.

Sprains and strains can also cause problems with your back and these are generally caused by overstretching or tearing a muscle or ligament. This happens most often when you lift something the wrong way or try to carry too much weight.

Even your posture can drastically affect your back and how well it rebounds from a minor injury. If you are always slouched over, your spine and muscles cannot function the way they should. Your body is built to function best when everything is aligned, so if you slouch or have bad posture, it will cause everything to be out of alignment. That makes it easier to injure yourself and even just slouching can cause back pain.

There are so many causes of pain in the back, but how do you fix them? You should see a doctor, of course, especially if you have pain for several days, the pain is quite severe, or if it continues to worsen. You should also seek medical help if the pain is affecting your daily life.

That being said, there are a few ways to help ensure your body works as well as possible and to banish back pain on your own.



METHOD #1: Exercise the Pain Away

When you injure yourself, the first instinct is to stop using the affected part. When this is your back, you probably don't want to do anything. Rest is good to a certain extent. If you've pulled a muscle, you should probably stay still for a bit. However, it can also be very detrimental, particularly in chronic pain cases.

Have you noticed that after you stay still for a period of time, your back hurts more? When you wake up in the morning, stretching out and getting up out of bed is far more painful than if you lie down and get right back up. There's a reason for this.

Resting up after an injury allows the body to begin healing it. After a certain point, though, it's actually doing more damage to spend time on bed rest. You'll be getting weaker, not stronger, and the pain could end up growing.

So, how long should you rest if you find yourself with acute back pain? Experts recommend not more than three days of resting up. Anything after that can be detrimental.



BEST EXERCISES FOR BACK PAIN

When you're experiencing back pain, you need to take care and not strain your back any further than it already has been. This means you shouldn't start lifting things or mowing the lawn, etc. when you have back pain.

The most beneficial exercises are those that let you stretch out the muscles without putting too much pressure on your body. These include:

KNEE TO CHEST MOVES: Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Pull first one knee up to your chest and hold for 10-20 seconds, keeping your other foot flat on the floor. Lower the leg and repeat with the other leg. This stretches the back and helps realign it.



PELVIC TILTS: These are helpful for building your core, as well as easing pain. Lie on your back with your knees bent to keep your feet flat on the floor. Now pull your stomach in, as if your belly button is trying to touch your spine. This moves your spine against the floor while tilting your pelvis and hips, helping build those stomach muscles and keeping your spine in position. Hold for 10 seconds and release.



SWIMMING: The water helps reduce the amount of gravity pulling on your body, so you can move easier. It's very relaxing and swimming slowly lets you stretch out those muscles and correct your posture without too much strain. Just be sure to avoid anything that requires you to twist your body.



YOGA: Slow, easy stretching can help tone your muscles and get them back in shape without overloading your back. Talk to a yoga instructor to find the best positions for your body. These stretching moves are ideal for easing back pain.



EXERCISES TO BUILD YOUR CORE

A strong core is essential if you want to have a good back into your old age. You can build your core at any age, fortunately, and this basically means you have strong muscles to support your bones and keep your posture correct. With strong stomach muscles, your posture will be better and your back will have better support.

These exercises can help prevent back pain in the first place, so they're useful if you're experiencing mild pain or if you have recently recovered from back pain. They are generally not that great if you have extreme chronic back pain.

AB EXERCISES: Check out abdominal exercises on YouTube to find plenty of great ideas and exercises to get you started. Keep in mind that you probably don't want to try these while you have back pain. They are more about preventing it in the first place.

PLANKING: This requires you to form a stiff board with your body by putting your forearms on the floor and having your legs stretched out behind you, with your toes on the ground. Keep your body flat and don't let it sag. Your spine should be essentially straight from your head to your bottom and your legs need to be straight as well. This tightens up your core muscles.

PILATES: Designed to build your core, Pilates is a good way to strengthen muscles in your back and abdomen, as well as your sides. You can do some of the exercises without any special equipment, but it's a good idea to take a class so you have the equipment and an experienced teacher to help out.

YOGA: Again, yoga is an excellent method of working those core muscles in a smooth, gentle manner.

If you're hurting, you should avoid resting up too much and getting stiff. While long periods of exercise aren't great, you can definitely spend some time stretching, walking, or swimming to help loosen things up and promote the healing process.



METHOD #2: Reduce Inflammation

Most people know that things like arthritis can be caused by inflammation in the body, but did you know it can also affect your back? Inflammation is a natural immune system response that is meant to protect an injury and encourage blood flow to an area. However, if it malfunctions, this can result in a lot of pain and ongoing problems.

Consider that inflammation causes swelling. Any type of swelling along the spine can compress nerves and cause more pain. It also stretches tissues and can make the area hot and swollen. None of this is good.

To treat inflammation, you have quite a few options. First, you can apply alternating heat and cold packs. Cold reduces inflammation while the heat encourages blood flow to the area and can help flush the inflammatory hormones out of the area, while encouraging healing.

Another good way to prevent your immune system from overreacting and causing excess inflammation is to pay attention to your diet. Highly processed foods, refined sugars, and grease can all contribute to inflammation in the body. Sticking to fresh, minimally processed foods in your diet can help you ease that pain and it will help you build healthier joints, too.



OTHER METHODS OF REDUCING INFLAMMATION INCLUDE:

ACUPUNCTURE: This Chinese method of inserting thin needles into specific points in the body may bring some relief.

ANTI-INFLAMMATORY DRUGS: There are medications that can help reduce inflammation. They do have side effects, however, and most people don't want to use them long term.

CHIROPRACTOR: A chiropractor can help realign the bones in your back and this may help with pain and inflammation.

EAT ANTI-INFLAMMATORY FOODS: Certain foods are known to reduce inflammation in the body. For example, olive oil, fatty fish, berries, and green leafy vegetables are all excellent for bringing down inflammation.

EXERCISE: As previously discussed, a good, gentle exercise program can help you maintain mobility and it can also reduce inflammation by promoting circulation. The more you move, the more your blood moves around and this can also drain the lymph system.

MASSAGE: A good massage can help reduce inflammation and keep things flowing in the body. Be sure they are experienced with back pain, however, since the wrong type of massage or pressure could actually make things worse.



Try a few different methods of reducing inflammation. Not everything will work for every person, so you might have to test a few different options to see which works best for you.

METHOD #3: Build Your Bones

Part of the problem as we age is that our bones become worn down. In the case of your spine, the vertebrae actually compress, thanks to thinning discs. Your bones may also lose mass, which makes them more vulnerable to damage and you will find that your muscles are not as strong as they once were.

To prevent back pain from these issues, it's best to start early with building your bone mass and keeping your core strong. As mentioned under method one, exercise plays a big part in this. However, you also need to provide your body with the right nutrients and minerals to build those strong, solid bones and healthy muscles.

Ideally, you'll get the necessary nutrition from your diet, but since most people don't get nearly enough from the food they eat, a supplement may be necessary. Look for one that is designed for joint or cartilage health, as this will help with your bones. It should include ingredients to reduce inflammation and pain, while supporting your bones and muscles.

Scientists have recently discovered that calcium isn't the main building block for bones. You **need to ingest a variety of minerals**, including magnesium and calcium, as well as a variety of others. It's important to have a varied diet so you can be sure you're getting different nutrients, but you'll also need to have a supplement if your diet isn't up to snuff.

Collagen is an important ingredient in any supplement you take for your bones and muscles. It helps keep you supple and moving well. If you don't like to eat fatty fish, you'll also want a supplement that includes **Omega 3 fatty** acids to help lubricate your joints and stimulate a healthy spine. **Turmeric** or similar will help with reducing inflammation and you'll find it easier to move if you're not as stiff and sore as usual.

A good choice for this is our **ULTIMATE JOINT SUPPORT** supplement, which contains everything to help your body stay mobile. If you're dealing with back pain or joint pain, it can be very helpful to have the right supplement.

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WHAT NOW?

You should always work with your doctor when dealing with chronic back pain. You never know if something you're doing is making it worse, so it's best to get the all clear from a medical professional.

If possible, you want to prevent back pain before it begins. This means you should be very careful, particularly as you get older, about how you lift things and twist and turn your body. If need be, wear a support belt to help keep your back safe when lifting things.

You should also work on your core strength. This is something that can be improved throughout your life and it really has no age limits. Even if you're in your 60's or 70's, you can still strengthen those muscles and give your back more support. It can really make a difference in how often you injure yourself.

Of course, some back pain is simply the result of using your body too hard when you were young. In these cases, you may not be able to avoid the pain by working on your core, but you can still reduce pain and inflammation by taking turmeric and other helpful ingredients in a supplement or added to your food.

You don't have to suffer from back pain. It's something that you can prevent in many cases and, if you are already in pain, you can treat it, often at home.



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