

Useful references

www.action-on-pain.co.uk

Information on strategies to cope with chronic pain.

www.painconcern.org.uk

Information on local support groups.
Forums and podcasts for discussion groups.
Information leaflets.

www.arthritiscare.or.uk

Local support group information.
Self management advise.

www.backcare.org.uk

Large information resource e.g. how to set up desk,
best type of bags, exercise advise for gym e.t.c.

www.nhs.uk **search expert patient program**

Access to groups for education, relaxation and other classes.

Back to Fitness

Managing your back pain



A guide for patients based
upon the latest evidence

Mount Vernon Physiotherapy
2015

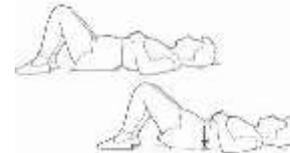
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Exercises



Knee rolls – With the knees bent, slowly drop the knees from side to side gently



Pelvic tilt – With your knees bent, slowly rock your pelvis forwards and backwards as if trying to flatten your back into the bed and then arch gently.



Knee hug – Bring both knees up towards your chest to feel the stretch across your lower back



Cat Stretch – With your arms straight in front of you, sit back onto your heels to feel the stretch



Cat / Camel – In a 4 point kneeling position rock your pelvis so you arch your back like a camel and then stretch your back like a cat

Activity / Exercise



The Facts

Backs are designed to move

4/5 affected

4 out of 5 people will have back pain at some point

Reduces pain

Develops muscles

Damage is rare

Serious or permanent damage is rare. Most back pain is not due to serious disease.

Keeps you supple

Regular activity

Cause

Pain is often caused mechanical forces applied on the spine, the same as in any other part of the body.

Makes you feel good

Makes your bones stronger

Backs are Strong

Your spine is one of the strongest parts of your body. It is made of solid bony blocks joined by discs to give it strength and flexibility. It is reinforced by strong ligaments and surrounded by large and powerful muscles to protect it.

Makes you fit

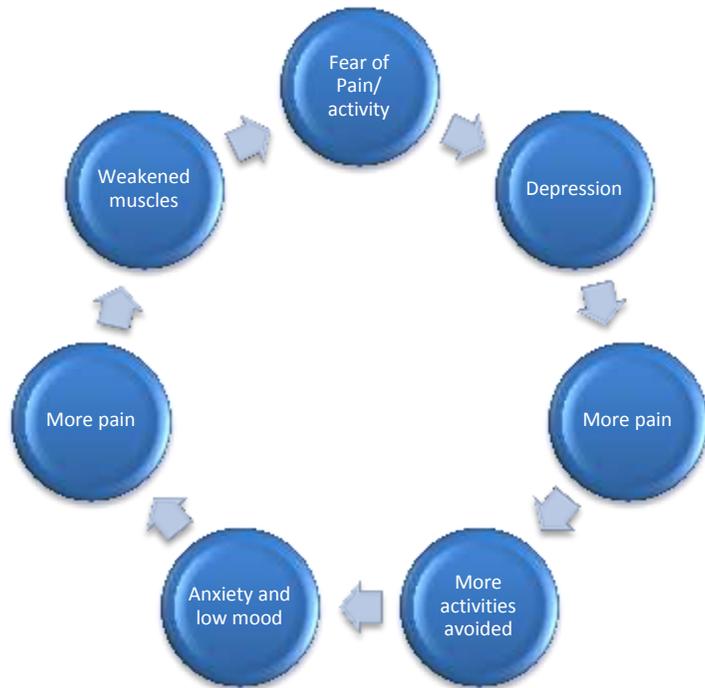
Exercise doesn't have to mean Gyms / Sport

Activity could be walking rather than driving to work.

Stay Active

A fitter back is a better back

The Pain Cycle



Persistent pain is pain that continues for 3 months or more and may not respond to standard medical treatment. It can be disabling and frustrating to manage.

When you are in pain for a long time you may think it best to avoid normal activities and movement, but we know that a lack of activity can cause the muscles to become weak, this can therefore cause increased pain. This is known as the 'Pain Cycle'

Dealing with an a flare up



Anxiety / Stress / Mood

You may feel worried about your back. This can however, cause more tension leading to pain.

Although you may not be able to remove the cause of stress you can learn strategies to reduce how it affects you.

Distraction



- Read a book
- Listen to music
- Gardening
- Dancing
- Walking

Breathing exercises



- Find a comfortable position, focus upon your breathing, slow and steady breathing, 'Let go' of tension as you breathe out
- Complete this slowly – 10-15mins

Relaxation techniques



- Imagery – imagine you are in a calm safe place like a beach, imagine the waves lapping on the shore and the feeling of the sun on your skin

Pain ≠ Damage

A study looked at how common degenerative spine conditions were in pain free population by reviewing scans

80% of 50
year olds
had disk
degenerati
on

69% of 60
year olds
had a disk
bulge

45% of 40
year olds
had disk
height loss

50% of 60
year olds
had joint
degenerati
on

Pacing

Pacing activities is important and a key method of managing your pain.



Try not to fall into the habit of trying to do everything on days your back is 'feeling good' this will often lead to a bad day or two following.



Pacing in short is: taking a break before you need it throughout the day

E.G. Don't feel you need to do all the ironing or vacuuming in one go



Pain Control



Hot or Cold may give you some relief. Test to see what works best.

ALWAYS wrap your hot water bottle or frozen peas in a tea towel so not to burn yourself.



Aim to use the hot or cold for about 20 minutes at a time.

Medication - Taking regular pain relief is useful and allows you to remain active. Don't wait for the pain to get bad before using, by then it will be too late.

For pain relief advice speak to your GP.