

Does Back Pain Go Away On It's own?

Northshore FYZICAL



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Did you know that 80% of all individuals suffer from low back pain at some point in their lives? At times, the cause can be a specific injury. In other cases, the cause cannot be accurately determined. Low back pain is the second most common reason for a visit to the doctor's office (the first is upperrespiratory infections).

What Causes Low Back Pain

The spine is a complex structure made up of bones, joints, ligaments, and muscles. It can be injured in several ways. It's possible to sprain ligaments, muscles, or get a bulging or herniated disc. These are just some of the factors that can lead to low back pain. There can be times when the simplest movement (bending down to pick up a pencil from the floor, picking up your child) can lead to severe pain.

Will My Back Heal Itself?

Unlike muscles and bone, the lower back is a complex part of the body that does NOT "heal" on its own. It is critical to identify the underlying cause (which is where we help you) so that you can get permanent, longterm relief.

The persistence of low back pain was revealed in a study by Hestback and



colleagues in 2003. The study revealed that back pain lasted longer than 30 days for over 33% of people who experienced low back pain. Also, very few people (9% to be exact) with low back pain remained pain free after 5 years.

This highlights the importance of an evaluation from a licensed physical therapist, which is exactly where we come in to help you.

What If I Suffer From Long-Lasting Back Pain?

Persistent, chronic pain is more than just an inconvenience. It can make daily activities painfully challenging and limit your ability to do the things you enjoy. You may find it difficult to play with your children, complete tasks at home or work, and it may even confine you to staying indoors. It can substantially limit your social life.

That's not all. Many individuals cut back on physical activity. This leads to muscle weakness, which causes more pain and weakness. This triggers a vicious cycle that grows worse with each passing day.

Your physical therapist can help you break this painful cycle! In most cases, we can help individuals with long-lasting back pain feel improvement shortly after starting physical therapy. If your back pain is not resolving quickly, call us today.



Types of Low Back Pain

${f N}$ on-specific low back pain

This is the most common type of back pain. About 19 in 20 cases of acute (sudden onset) low back pain are classified as *non-specific*. This is the type of back pain that most people will have at some point in their life. It is called non-specific because it is usually not clear what is actually causing the pain. In other words, there is no specific problem or disease that can be identified as to the cause of the pain.

Nerve root pain - often called

sciatica This occurs in less than 1 in 20 cases of acute low back pain. Nerve root pain means that a nerve coming out from the spinal cord (the root of the nerve) is irritated or pressed on. (Many people call this a trapped nerve.). The irritation or pressure on the nerve may also cause pins and needles, numbness or weakness in part of a buttock, leg or foot.

Cauda equina syndrome is a particularly serious type of nerve root problem. This is a rare disorder where the nerves are pressed on at the very bottom of the spinal cord are pressed on. This syndrome can cause low back pain plus: problems with bowel and bladder function (usually unable to pass urine), numbress in the saddle area (around the anus), and weakness in one or both legs. See a doctor immediately if you suspect cauda equina syndrome.

Less common causes of low back pain

Arthritis (inflammation of the joints) of the spine sometimes causes back pain. Osteoarthritis is the most common form or arthritis and usually occurs in older people. Ankylosing spondylitis is another form of arthritis that can occur in young adults and causes pain and stiffness in the lower back. Rheumatoid arthritis may affect the spine, but you are likely to have joints affected other too.

Various uncommon bone disorders, tumors, infections, and pressure from structures near to the spine occasionally cause low back pain. (Less than 1 in 100 cases of low back pain.)

Understanding The Lower Back

he lower back is also called the lumbosacral area of the back. It is the part of the back between the bottom of the ribs and the top of the legs.

Most of the lower back is made up of muscles that attach to, and surround, the spine. The spine is made up of many bones called vertebrae. The vertebrae are roughly circular and between each vertebra is a disc. The discs between the vertebrae are a combination of a strong fibrous outer layer and a softer, gel like center. The discs act as shock absorbers and allow the spine to be flexible.

Strong ligaments also attach to adjacent vertebrae to give extra support and strength to the spine. The various muscles that are attached to the spine enable the spine to bend and move in various ways.

The spinal cord, which contains the nerve pathways to and from the brain, is protected by the spine. Nerves from the spinal cord come out from between the vertebrae to take and receive messages to various parts of the body.

Can I Prevent My Back Pain From Returning?

Here are some tips from • our physical therapists to keep your spine healthy and pain-free:

When lifting an object, bend at your knees, not your back. Be sure to squat with the correct technique to pick up an object. Keep your back straight and keep the object close to your body.



Avoid twisting your body • while lifting anything.



- When sitting, make sure your feet are flat on the floor and your back is straight.
- Avoid sitting for long periods of time. If you must, make sure to stand up and stretch frequently. The right footwear can protect your spine. Flats or low heels are safer than

- Avoid sitting on the couch free living. for too long, since it de-conditions the muscles surrounding your spine.
- Exercise regularly. Increasing muscle strength with the right exercises (which we will teach you) will minimize pain and injury.

Don't neglect your low back, even if you are pain free. We ÿou téach can several preventative exercises and conduct a postural evaluation to determine if you may be at risk for back pain.

What are you waiting for? Schedule an appointment with us today so we can show you how to protect your spine. It's time to get you 'back' to pain-



Reference: Hestback L, Leboeuf-Yde C, Engberg M, Lauritzen T, T. Engberg M, Lauritzen 1, Bruun NH, Manniche C. The course of low-back pain in a general population. Results from a 5-year prospective study. J Manipulative PhysiolTher 2003 May;26(4):213-9.

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How to solve Sudoku puzz To solve a Sudoku, you only ne and patience. No math is require Simply make sure that each 3x region has a number 1 through only one occurrence of each num Each column and row 6 5 2 7 9 8 1 3 3 7 4 9 of the large grid must have only one 5 6 9 1 1 2 3 6 7 4 8 5 instance of the numbers 1 through 9 The difficulty rating on this puzzle is easy.

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