SEO Template for new content

Target keywords: improve posture, back pain, good posture

Page title

• Optimal title length: **55 characters**

• Add at least one of your target keywords to your <title> tag, don't use each target keyword more than 1 time: **improve posture, back pain, good posture**

Meta description

• Optimal meta length: **160 characters**

H1

• Add all your target keywords at least one time: **improve posture, back pain, good posture**

Text

• Try to acquire backlinks from the following domains: [emantraonline.in](http://emantraonline.in), [carla-hd.de](http://carla-hd.de), [howtodo.my.id](http://howtodo.my.id), [wikihow.com](http://wikihow.com), [savvynana.com](http://savvynana.com), [vostok-bereg.ru](http://vostok-bereg.ru), [hongkongyachting.com](http://hongkongyachting.com), [betterme.world](http://betterme.world), [topazhorizon.com](http://topazhorizon.com), [yearzerosurvival.com](http://yearzerosurvival.com), [sip21c.org](http://sip21c.org), [voltarengel.com](http://voltarengel.com), [geo-naturpark.net](http://geo-naturpark.net), [deniseaustin.com](http://deniseaustin.com), [myhealthtoolkit.com](http://myhealthtoolkit.com), [findquestionanswer.com](http://findquestionanswer.com), [vitaminpatchesonline.com](http://vitaminpatchesonline.com), [iliveok.com](http://iliveok.com), [gottamentor.com](http://gottamentor.com), [moptu.com](http://moptu.com)

• Enrich your text with the following semantically related words: **correct posture, crossing your legs, hold your body, naturally curved, shoulder blades, prevent back pain, core muscles, pain include, poor posture, sitting position, side effects, spinal stenosis, lumbar spine, sitting and standing, abdominal muscles, everyday activities, spinal cord, long term, health care, reduce pain**

• Focus on creating more informative content. Recommended text length: **760.0**

• Make sure that your text is easy to read with the Flesch-Kincaid readability test. The readability score should be: **69.28604819824596**

• Add at least one of your target keywords: **improve posture, back pain, good posture**

When your content has been published, [launch a SEO Ideas](https://www.semrush.com/features/seo-ideas/?utm-source=sct&utm-medium=template) campaign to check if your content complies with all on-page SEO factors and discover what else can be done to give your content a SEO boost.

Analyzed top-10-ranking rivals for your target keywords

back pain

1. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/back-pain/symptoms-causes/syc-20369906>

2. <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/back-pain>

3. <https://www.versusarthritis.org/about-arthritis/conditions/back-pain/>

4. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/back-pain/7-ways-to-treat-chronic-back-pain-without-surgery>

5. <https://www.healthline.com/health/back-pain>

6. <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/back-pain>

7. <https://www.spine-health.com/conditions/lower-back-pain/lower-back-pain-symptoms-diagnosis-and-treatment>

8. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/172943>

9. <https://msk.org.au/back-pain/>

10. <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/standards/clinical-care-standards/low-back-pain-clinical-care-standard>

good posture

1. <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/how-to-improve-your-posture>

2. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/multimedia/back-pain/sls-20076817>

3. <https://medlineplus.gov/guidetogoodposture.html>

4. <https://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/ss/slideshow-posture-tips>

5. <https://www.healthline.com/health/fitness-exercise/posture-benefits>

6. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/4485-back-health-and-posture>

7. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/strength-and-flexibility-exercises/common-posture-mistakes-and-fixes/>

8. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/pain/4-ways-to-turn-good-posture-into-less-back-pain>

9. <https://www.physio-pedia.com/Posture>

10. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RqcOCBb4arc>

improve posture

1. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/strength-and-flexibility-exercises/common-posture-mistakes-and-fixes/>

2. <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/how-to-improve-your-posture>

3. <https://www.healthline.com/health/guide-to-better-posture-exercises>

4. <https://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/ss/slideshow-posture-tips>

5. <https://www.spine-health.com/wellness/ergonomics/ten-tips-improving-posture-and-ergonomics>

6. <https://www.shape.com/lifestyle/mind-and-body/how-to-improve-posture>

7. <https://medlineplus.gov/guidetogoodposture.html>

8. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/325883>

9. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/is-it-too-late-to-save-your-posture>

10. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/4485-back-health-and-posture>

See how competitors write about targeted keywords:

**improve posture**

**1.** <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/strength-and-flexibility-exercises/common-posture-mistakes-and-fixes/>

Common posture mistakes and fixes
Exercises and tips to help alleviate muscle tension caused by poor sitting and standing habits.
Physiotherapist Nick Sinfield describes 8 common posture mistakes and how to correct them with strength and stretching exercises.
If you have back pain, improving your posture is unlikely to address the root cause of your pain, but it may help alleviate muscle tension.
"Correcting your posture may feel awkward at first because your body has become so used to sitting and standing in a particular way," says Sinfield.
"But with a bit of practise, good posture will become second nature and be 1 step to helping your back in the long term."
Slouching in a chair
Slouching doesn't always cause discomfort, but over time this position can place strain on already sensitised muscles and soft tissues.
This strain may increase tension in the muscles, which may in turn cause pain.
Get into the habit of sitting correctly. It may not feel comfortable initially because your muscles have not been conditioned to support you in the correct position.
Exercises to strengthen your core and buttock muscles, and back extensions, will help correct a slouching posture.
Sticking your bottom out
If your bottom tends to stick out or you have a pronounced curve in your lower back, you may have hyperlordosis. This is an exaggerated inward curve of the lower back that creates a "Donald Duck" posture.
Core and buttock strengthening exercises, hip flexor and thigh stretches, and making a conscious effort to correct your standing posture are recommended to help correct a sticking out bottom.
Wearing high heels, excessive weight around the stomach and pregnancy can all contribue to a "Donald Duck" posture.
To help correct your standing posture, imagine a string attached to the top of your head pulling you upwards.
The idea is to keep your body in perfect alignment, maintaining the spine's natural curvature, with your neck straight and shoulders parallel with the hips:
keep your shoulders back and relaxed
pull in your abdomen
keep your feet about hip distance apart
balance your weight evenly on both feet
try not to tilt your head forward, backwards or sideways
keep your legs straight, but knees relaxed
Watch a video on improving your posture.
Video: NHS Strength and flexibility - posture
In this video, Laura from the NHS Couch to 5K programme, shows you how to have the correct posture.
Media last reviewed: 3 April 2022
Media review due: 3 April 2025
See exercise video safety information
The exercises in this video are suitable for most people. They are general exercises only and are not aimed at treating any specific cause of pain or condition.
Get advice from a GP or health professional before trying it, especially if:
you have any concerns about your health
you are not sure if the exercises are suitable
you have any pre-existing health problems or injuries, or any current symptoms
Stop the exercise immediately and get medical help if you feel any pain or feel unwell.
Standing with a flat back
A flat back means your pelvis is tucked in and your lower back is straight instead of naturally curved, causing you to stoop forward. People with a flat back often find it difficult standing for long periods.
This posture is often caused by muscle imbalances, which encourage you to adopt such a position. Spending long periods sitting down can also contribute to a flat back.
A flat back also tends to make you lean your neck and head forwards, which can cause neck and upper back strain.
Exercises to strengthen your core, buttocks, neck and rear shoulder muscles, and back extensions, are recommended to help correct a flat back.
Leaning on 1 leg
Leaning more on 1 leg while standing can feel comfortable, especially if you have been standing for a while. But instead of using your buttocks and core muscles to keep you upright, you place excessive pressure on 1 side of your lower back and hip.
Over time, you may develop muscle imbalances around the pelvis area, which can cause muscular strain in the lower back and buttocks.
Other causes of uneven hips include carrying heavy backpacks on 1 shoulder, and parents carrying toddlers on 1 hip.
To improve this posture, try to get into the habit of standing with your weight evenly distributed on both legs.
Hunched back and 'text neck'
Hunching over your keyboard is usually a sign that you have a tight chest and a weak upper back. Over time, this type of posture can contribute to you developing a rounded upper back, which can cause shoulder and upper back stiffness.
When hunching over a computer, your head may tend to lean forward, which can lead to poor posture. Using a mobile can cause similar problems dubbed "text neck".
Upper back, neck and rear shoulder strengthening exercises, chest stretches and neck posture drills are recommended to help correct a hunched back.
Poking your chin
The poking chin posture can be caused by sitting too low, a screen set too high, a hunched back, or a combination of all 3.
Correcting a poking chin involves improving your sitting habits and exercises to correct your posture.
How to correct a poking chin:
gently lengthen your neck upwards as you tuck in your chin
bring your shoulder blades down and back towards your spine
pull in your lower tummy muscles to maintain a natural curve in your lower back
adjust your seating
Rounded shoulders
A way to tell if you have rounded shoulders is to stand in front of a mirror and let your arms hang naturally by your sides. If your knuckles face forward, it may indicate that you have a tight chest and a weak upper back, giving the appearance of rounded shoulders.
Rounded shoulders are typically caused by poor posture habits, muscle imbalances and focusing too much on certain exercises, such as too much focus on chest strength while neglecting the upper back.
Cradling your phone
Holding your phone handset between your ear and shoulder places strain on the muscles of the neck, upper back and shoulders. The neck and shoulders are not designed to hold this position for any length of time.
Over time, this posture can place strain on the muscles and other soft tissues, and lead to muscle imbalances between the left and right side of your neck.
Try to get into the habit of holding the phone with your hand, or use a hands-free device.
Exercises for neck stiffness and pain:
neck stretches – gently lower your left ear towards your left shoulder; hold for 10 to 15 deep breaths, then repeat on opposite side
neck rotations – slowly turn your chin towards 1 shoulder; hold for 10 to 15 deep breaths, then repeat on opposite side

**2.** <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/how-to-improve-your-posture>

How to improve your posture
7-minute read
Thank you for sharing our content. A message has been sent to your recipient's email address with a link to the content webpage.
Your name: is required
Error: Not a valid value
Send to: is required
Error: Not a valid value
Error: This is required
I have read and agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy is required.
Submit
Related information on Australian websites
What is good posture?
Posture is how you sit or stand. Good posture positions the body correctly and makes sure your weight is evenly balanced. This means that the skeleton, muscles and ligaments aren’t overstretched or strained.
Good posture makes sure your spine has three curves. It also keeps the muscles on each side of the spine strong and well balanced. It will help prevent pain in your back, and may make you more mobile and less tired.
You can use good posture while you are sitting and standing. Make sure you relax and breathe normally.
Good posture makes sure your spine has three curves.
Good standing posture doesn’t mean to be stiff or rigid. You should stand loosely and flexibly with your:
back straight
head up, chin in and looking straight ahead
shoulders relaxed
weight balanced evenly on your two feet
knees straight
When you are sitting, your back should be against the back of the chair. Your knees should make a right angle, with your feet on the floor. It’s important to avoid crossing your legs.
Practicing good posture will help prevent discomfort such as muscle , back , and neck pain .
Correct posture is important for maintaining a healthy spine. When seated at your desk, make sure that your back is against the chair and your feet are on the floor.
What causes poor posture?
Problems with posture can also be caused by conditions that weaken one or more of the structures that support the body. These structures include your:
neck
back muscles
abdominal wall
In some cases, people are born with genetic conditions that affect the shape of the spine and hips. This can influence posture from birth. Such conditions can be managed to reduce the harmful effects they can have on posture over time.
In other cases, injuries from sports or other activities can affect your posture as the body protects itself from more injury, such as by limping when you have hurt your foot.
Often, our posture changes as a result of the work we do, or other activities that lead to overuse of different parts of the body.
Underuse can also be a problem. For example, weak back muscles on either side of the spine, can affect our ability to maintain a good posture. The same applies to the muscles in the abdominal wall at the front of our bodies.
For many people, sitting for many hours each day year in and year out causes muscles and ligaments to tighten or become weaker. This can also lead to poor posture.
General tips to improve your posture
Exercise regularly — even 30 minutes of low impact exercise a day will keep your body supple and active. This will also help you improve your general health.
Gentle exercises, such as those in yoga and Pilates, help to strengthen the support muscles in your back and stomach. These exercises can help with posture correction. Concentrate on strengthening the muscles in your core (torso and pelvis).
Spend 10 minutes a day doing simple stretching exercises to improve your posture.
Stand tall. This means straightening your spine, moving your shoulders down to their natural resting position and gently tightening your stomach muscles.
Do simple head movements to help loosen tightened neck muscles that can interfere with good posture. Try gently moving your head in small circles, or from front to back and side to side.
Lie flat on the ground for two to three minutes once a day. Do this exercise without using any cushions or support, and relax. This will allow your body to readjust to its natural resting position, and help correct your posture.
Wear flat, well-fitting shoes to assist with even weight distribution.
Make sure you lift using your hips, knees and thighs, not your back.
How to improve your posture at home
Try not to cross your legs when seated as it can overstretch one side of your leg muscles. This can change the alignment of your spine over time, particularly if you always cross your legs the same way.
Don’t spend too long sitting on low-seated sofas or very soft chairs.
When sleeping, try to use a single firm support pillow. This can prevent neck pain developing. It’s best to lie on your side with your knees bent. Make sure you also have a supportive mattress.
Take care when carrying heavy things, for example bags of books, computer equipment or shopping. Make sure that you distribute the weight of your bags evenly on either side of your body. A backpack distributes weight evenly over your shoulders.
If you are a carer and spend a lot of time lifting, pushing or carrying the person you care for, make sure you look after your own posture. Undertake such physical activities correctly.
How to improve your posture at work
When seated, keep your back straight and your feet flat on the ground. Try to keep your knees and your hips level. You may need a footrest to keep your hips and knees level. If you sit for long periods, you should support your lower back against the back of your chair. This can be done with a small rolled up towel, or commercial product.
Avoid sitting in a hunched position for long periods of time, such as when using a laptop or desktop computer. Make sure you get up and move around at regular intervals to alter your body position.
If your job involves lots of repetitive tasks or lifting and bending, ask your employer about training in the correct way to lift and carry heavy, bulky or awkward objects.
If you spend a lot of time on the telephone, you run the risk of phone strain. Resting a telephone on your shoulder can twist your neck while keep the phone in place. You may find a headset is more comfortable.
How to improve your posture when driving
Make sure your car seat and headrest are in the correct position to promote safe, comfortable driving.
The steering wheel should be adjusted so it’s level with your chest, not your face. Keep your arms bent and your thumbs on the rim of the steering wheel. Have the seat upright so your back and shoulders are supported. Sit deep in the seat, bracing your body with your left foot. Exercise this to improve your posture while travelling.
Sources:

**3.** <https://www.healthline.com/health/guide-to-better-posture-exercises>

Our body holds us up
Design by Pichamon Chamroenrak. Photographs by James Farrell.
Thanks to gravity, our feet are well grounded. But the efforts of not completely face planting? We owe that to our postural muscles.
At our muscle’s peak, they prevent our bones and ligaments from being stressed, strained, and jutting out of alignment. More magic our postural muscles are responsible for? Keeping our heads upright and minds well.
But between crossing our legs and Netflix marathons , the relationship we have with postural muscles may have flickered out over time, leaving our bodies at risk for spinal wear and tear and chronic pain.
Getting that perfect spine back isn’t going to be a quick fix. You’ll need consistency, awareness, and dedication — virtues you can develop with this “Every Woman’s Guide to Better Posture in 30 Days.”
Over the next 30 days, these movements and exercises will help you:
loosen up muscles
Building the foundation to great posture
This week is about learning new poses and exercises and using them to develop what is called an “Awareness Routine.”
Learn poses that will help you lengthen your spine and release any tension you may have built up over the last few years.
Day 1: Do a posture check
Share on Pinterest
Stand against a wall to check your posture. You should have less than 2 inches between the wall and your neck and back. Keep this position in mind as you go throughout the rest of your day, checking in at every hour.
According to Dr. Austin Davis of Life Chiropractic SF , when it comes to posture, awareness is what’s most important.
How to do a posture check:
Stand with the back of your head against the wall and place your heels 6 inches from the wall. Your shoulder blades and butt should be touching the wall.
Measure the space between your neck and the wall, and the space between your lower back and the wall. There should be less than 2 inches between both spaces. A larger gap indicates impaired posture.
Day 2: Do Child’s Pose
Do 5 minutes of Child’s Pose, morning and night. Child’s Pose helps lengthen and stretch the spine, which is used to slouching after years of bad posture.
How to do Child’s Pose:
Start on your hands and knees, with your knees as far as shoulders-width apart and big toes touching each other.
Crawl forward on your hands and extend your arms straight out toward the front of the mat. You can also drape your arms on the floor alongside your body.
Slowly start to drop your hips back to rest on your heels.
Rest your forehead on the floor.
Breathe here for 5–10 deep breaths.
Day 3: Add Standing Forward Fold
Start with 2 minutes of Child’s Pose and then practice 30-second intervals of Standing Forward Fold for 4 minutes. This pose deeply stretches the hamstrings, stretches the hips, and can help release any tension in the neck and shoulders.
How to do Standing Forward Fold:
Start with your feet hips-distance apart and bend at the knees to support your body.
Exhale as you bend forward at the hips, lengthening the front of your torso.
Bend your elbows and hold on to each elbow with the opposite hand. Let the crown of your head hang down. Press your heels into the floor as you lift your sit bones toward the ceiling.
Pull your shoulders away from your ears and drop your head and neck.
Lengthen your legs until you feel a stretch in the hamstring muscles. Work on engaging your quadriceps to help your hamstring muscles release.
Release deeper into the pose with each exhalation. Let your head hang as you feel the tension roll out of your shoulders and neck.
Day 4: Add Cat-Cow
Follow this stretch sequence in the morning and at night: Hold the active Child’s Pose for 1 minute and the Standing Forward Fold for 2 minutes. Then, do Cat-Cow for 5 minutes. This movement sequence will help increase spinal awareness, which is a large part of less-than-perfect posture.
How to do Cat-Cow:
Start on all fours. Your wrists should be stacked under the elbows which are stacked under the shoulders. Keep your fingers spread against the ground for increased stability and keep your neck neutral.
Begin the cat phase: As you exhale, tuck your tailbone under using your abdominal muscles to push your spine toward the ceiling, making the shape of a Halloween cat. Lengthen your neck and allow your head to reach toward your chest so that your ears come down by the biceps.
On the out breathe, “swoop and scoop” the pelvis into the Cow position so that your belly is dropped toward the floor. Lift your chin and chest and gaze up toward the ceiling. Draw your shoulders away from your ears.
Day 5: Add chest stretch
Hold active Child’s Pose for 1 minute, Standing Forward Fold for 2 minutes, and Cat-Cow for 2 minutes. Add 2 minutes of a chest stretch. This is the inverse of how we normally sit at work, so it can help reverse poor alignment and ward off back pain. Do this morning and night.
How to do it:
Start by standing. If you have joint pain, sit on your butt with your legs stretched out in front of you.
Reach your arms behind you and interlace your fingers below your lower back. If your arms don’t reach, use a small towel or PVC pipe instead.
Keep your head neutral and your eyes set straight ahead.
Then, when you’re ready, begin to lift your chest so that your entire trunk elongates toward the ceiling and reach your hands back toward the floor.
Hold this pose for 5 breaths, then relax and repeat.
Day 6: Add Standing Cat-Cow
Do 1 minute of active Child’s Pose, 2 minutes of Cat-Cow, and 2 minutes of the chest-opening stretch. Then stand up and do 2 minutes of the Forward Fold before doing 2 minutes of Standing Cat-Cow.
The point of Standing Cat-Cow is to differently activate the back and core muscles, and to help increase awareness of your back in relation to the rest of your body.
How to do Standing Cat-Cow:
With your legs hip-width apart and knees bent, place your hands either out in front of you or on your thighs for added balance.
Keeping your legs static, begin the cat (upward) phase. Lengthen your neck and allow your head to reach toward your chest, maintaining alignment with the spine.
On the out breathe, “swoop and scoop” the pelvis into Cow position.
Hold each pose for 5 breaths and repeat.
Day 7: Add chest stretches throughout the day
Repeat yesterday’s routine in the morning and night, but also conduct 2–3 minutes of the chest-opening stretch 3 times throughout the day.
Here’s the Awareness Routine you’ll do every morning for week 2:
Awareness Routine 1:
2 minutes Child’s Pose
2 minutes Cat-Cow
2 minutes Standing Forward Fold (swap the Fold for the chest opener on day 11)
The goal for week 2 is to strengthen your core muscles while maintaining posture and spinal awareness.
Day 8: Build your core
Before you start your Awareness Routine, do 3 to 5 rounds of high plank (one round equals 10 breaths).
The high plank requires awareness of the spinal position as well as engagement of the abdominal muscles, both of which are vital for encouraging posture corrections.
How to do high plank:
Start in a pushup position, with your arms straight. Press back through your heels so that the backs of your legs are active, too.
With your elbows underneath your shoulders, create space between your shoulders and ears so that there’s a slight stretch. Make sure your chest isn’t sinking and keep your shoulder blades back.
Do 3–5 rounds of 10 breaths, counting your breaths.
Day 9: Strengthen your back
Share on Pinterest
Today, end the Awareness Routine with 5 sets of Downward-Facing Dog (holding for 3 deep breaths).
Downward-Facing Dog is useful for opening the anterior chest wall and shoulders that are so often rounded with excessive desk work.
How to do it:
Begin on all fours.
Tuck your toes and lift your hips high, toward the ceiling.
Reach your heels back toward the mat without allowing them to plank on the ground. Drop your head so that your neck is long.
As you stay here, make sure that your wrist creases stay parallel to the front edge of the mat. To alleviate the pressure on your wrists, press into the knuckles of your forefinger and thumbs.
Breathe here.
Day 10: Loosen tight hips
Finish the Awareness Routine with 5 minutes doing Pigeon Pose. This pose helps loosen tight hips and releases tension in the back of the spine and glutes.
How to do Pigeon Pose:
Begin in Downward-Facing Dog.
Step both feet together and bring your right knee forward between your hands so that your outer right leg is resting on the mat.
Make sure your left hip is always pointing down toward the mat. If it begins opening up toward the ceiling, draw your right foot closer to your body.
Stay here with your hands resting on your right leg or walk your hands out in front of you, allowing your torso to rest over your right knee. Hold here.
Breathe into any areas of tightness and tension for 3–5 breaths, or about 30 seconds.
Then place your hands on the mat in front of you, tuck your left toes, and step your right foot back. You’ll now be back in Downward-Facing Dog again.
Step your left foot forward and repeat Pigeon on the left side.
Day 11: Maintain back awareness
Today, swap the Standing Forward Fold out of your Awareness Routine for the chest opener. Then, when you get to work, set a “movement” reminder alarm to go off on your phone every 20 minutes.
Each time the alarm goes off on your phone, stand up and do 30 seconds to 1 minute of Standing Cat-Cow.
Day 12: Double up on core strength
Plan for a 20-minute workout today — including an extra minute of the Pigeon Pose, if your hips are tight. After you’re done, do 10–12 reps of the side plank, hip up, and twists 3 times.
Strong abs will help support your back so that your back muscles aren’t compensating for your body’s efforts to maintain proper posture.
Day 13: Counteract work posture
Make time for the Awareness Routine in the morning and at night. Then, during the day, do 2 minutes of chest- and hip-opening stretches. Ideally, you’ll do chest and hip stretches every 2 hours to counteract work posture and keep your upper body alert and aligned.
How to do it:
Start on one knee with your opposite foot planted in front of you. Make sure your legs are far enough apart that your back leg can be lengthened while your front knee remains stacked directly over your ankle.
Place your hands on your front knee and tuck your tailbone slightly toward the floor in order to activate your glutes.
When you’re ready to begin, release the hip of your back leg forward and down toward the floor.
Clasp your hands behind your back and reach your arms down toward the back of your back knee, keeping your arms as straight as possible.
Lift your heart to open your chest.
Hold for 3 to 5 breaths. Repeat on the opposite side.
Day 14: Start standing at work
Share on Pinterest
Move your laptop or computer to a standing desk or counter. You can also eat lunch and take conference calls or meetings standing up. Another option is to spend 15 minutes of every hour standing.
If you don’t have a standing desk or high counter in your office, stack books or a crate on top of your desk to add height.
Here’s the Awareness Routine you’ll do every morning of week 3:
Awareness Routine 2:
2 minutes Child’s Pose
1 minute Cat-Cow
1 minute thoracic spine rotation
Do this routine every morning and complete other body goals throughout the day.
Day 15: Reduce stiffness in your lower back
At night, spend 5 minutes doing the thoracic spine rotation exercise. This pose helps improve mobility in your torso and reduces stiffness in the mid-to-lower back.
How to do it:
Start out lying on your right side with your fingers spread slightly.
Place your left hand behind your head, but keep your right hand outstretched on the ground in front of you with your fingers spread.
Rotate your left elbow to the sky while exhaling, stretching the front of your torso, and hold for one deep breath, in and out.
Return to the starting position and repeat for 5–10 breaths.
Switch arms and repeat.
Day 16: Move every 20 minutes
At work, set a “movement” reminder alarm to go off on your phone every 20 minutes. Each time the alarm goes off, stand up and stretch for 30 seconds.
Day 17: Try a beginner yoga class
Beginner yoga classes tend to include a lot of poses that can help improve posture such as Camel, Child’s Pose, Cat-Cow, Downward-Facing Dog, Pigeon, and other movements that you haven’t yet done as part of this guide, such as Mountain Pose, Bow Pose, and Plow Pose.
Day 18: Fire up your glutes
Today is about counteracting inactive glutes. When your glutes shut down, it can impact your hips and lead to poor posture.
So, set a phone alarm for every hour and every time the alarm goes off, do 30 seconds of isometric glute squeezes. (You can do these sitting in your seat too.) Hold this contraction for 10 seconds and then release. Repeat for 1 minute.
These isometric squeezes will help ensure that your glute muscles are firing properly.
Day 19: Tune into your sitting posture
For the whole day, set a phone alarm for every 20 minutes. Every time the alarm goes off, check in on your sitting posture.
Keep an eye on
your feet, which should be placed on the ground
your shoulders, which should be upright
your neck, which should be neutral
your sitting position, which should be upright, tall, and comfortable
Checking in with yourself and adjusting your posture accordingly can help reform neurological patterns. Try to avoid the following:
How to avoid poor posture
Don’t cross your legs.
Don’t slouch or jut your neck forward.
Don’t bend over at the waist.
Day 20: Hold your cell phone at eye level when you use it
Research
has shown that over time, looking down at our phones can exacerbate “text neck” or a neck that’s jutted forward. They found that even the slightest tilt of your head, like 15 degrees, can make your 10-pound head feel like 27 pounds.
Truly poor posture can turn our heads into 60-pound weights, increasing risk of early wear and tear to your spine.
Day 21: Repeat day 10
Add 5 minutes of Pigeon Pose at the end of your Awareness Routine for week 1. Bonus points: Because stress can increase aches and pains in the body, do one thing that helps you feel less stressed .
Day 22: Maintain your core strength
Begin the morning and night with 6 minutes of Child’s Pose, Cat-Cow, and Pigeon Pose. At the end of the day, repeat the plank workout regimen of day 12. However, this time, complete 4 sets instead of 3.
This week is about maintaining the strength and muscle memory you’ve built over the past few weeks. You’ll be practicing workout routines from the previous weeks but increasing the number of sets.
Day 23: Strengthen your glutes
Set a phone alarm for every hour. Every time the alarm goes off, do 30 seconds of isometric glute squeezes. Hold this contraction for 10 seconds and then release. Repeat for 1 minute.
Day 24: Strengthen your shoulders and back
Set a phone alarm for every hour. Every time the alarm goes off, do 10 seconds of isometric rows in your seat. These isometric rows work your entire shoulder girdle, rhomboids, and crucial postural muscles, which help improve posture.
How to do an isometric row:
Sit up straight and then drive your elbow into the seat behind you by squeezing your shoulder blades together.
Hold this contraction for 10 seconds and then release.
Repeat for 1 minute.
Day 25: Go to another yoga class
If you didn’t like the class you went to on day 17, try a beginner yoga class at a new studio. If you’re a first timer, most studios will offer you a discount — or better yet, let you take your first class for free !
Day 26: Work on core strength and flexibility
Complete 5 sets of plank workouts from day 12 (instead of 3). After the workout regimen, do 3–5 minutes of thoracic spine rotation and chest- and hip-opener stretches.
Day 27: Strengthen your glutes
Do the Awareness Routine for 5–6 minutes. If your abdominal muscles are sore from yesterday’s abdominal workout, spend extra time doing Cat-Cow to help stretch the muscles. When you get to work, repeat the isometric glute contractions throughout the day, every hour for 30 seconds.
Day 28: Spend 35 percent of your workday standing
Aim to stand for 35 percent of your workday. Bonus points: When you’re in the kitchen, try cutting vegetables and cooking while looking straight ahead as opposed to hunched over the oven or cutting board.
Day 29: Become more aware of your posture
Relax and stand against the wall and take a picture. Look and see if your natural position has improved since day 19. Keep your progress in mind as you move throughout the day.
Day 30: Spend 50 percent of your workday standing
Stand for 50 percent of your workday and at the end of the day, evaluate how it felt. Look into your company’s standing desk policy or look at investing in one for yourself at your at-home office.
If you feel that 30 days wasn’t enough time to readjust your posture, go back to day 16 and repeat the last 2 weeks.

**4.** <https://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/ss/slideshow-posture-tips>

Medically Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS on May 04, 2022
Don't Be a Slouch
1/9
It adds to the stress on your spine. That puts a strain on the bones, muscles, and joints you need to hold your backbone in place. But lousy posture isn't just bad for your back. A constant slump smashes your inside organs together, and makes it harder for your lungs and intestines to work. Over time, that’ll make it hard to digest food or get enough air when you breathe.
Straighten Up
2/9
A great way to prevent posture problems? Stand up tall. You'll feel better and look better -- slimmer, even. Pretend you’re standing against a wall to measure your height. Hold your head straight and tuck in your chin. Your ears should be over the middle of your shoulders. Stand with your shoulders back, knees straight, and belly tucked in. Don't let your booty or hips stick out. Straighten up so you feel like your head stretches toward the sky.
Don't Slump at Your Desk
3/9
It's comfy to slouch -- maybe even lean back and swivel a bit. But it’s a posture no-no. Try this instead: Sit all the way back in your chair. Place a small, rolled-up towel or lumbar cushion behind your mid-back to protect your spine's natural curve. Bend your knees at a right angle and keep them the same height, or a bit higher, than your hips. Place your feet flat on the floor.
Beware of 'Text Neck'
4/9
On your smartphone all day long? Take a minute to stretch your neck. When you tilt your head down to check messages it really strains your spine. Over the course of a day -- or year -- that can add up. For a better view, lift the phone up and move your eyes, not your head.
Don't Be a Low-Rider
5/9
Sure, it's cool and comfy to recline during a long drive. But it isn’t great for your posture. Instead, consider sitting more upright. Try not to lock your legs. Bend your knees slightly. They should be at hip level or a tad above. Don't forget to put a pillow or rolled-up towel behind you for support.
Save Heels for a Big Night Out
6/9
They might be a fashion yes, but they’re likely a posture no. Pumps and stilettos thrust the base of your spine forward, which over-arches your back. That can change the way your backbone lines up and put pressure on nerves, which causes back pain. Sky-high shoes also put more weight on your knees. Choose a lower, chunky heel for daily wear.
Hit the Hay the Right Way
7/9
Naptime is no excuse to slack. Skip the soft, saggy mattress. Choose a firm one that helps hold your spine's natural shape. Side sleeper? Bend your knees slightly but don't hug them. Place a pillow under your head so it's level with your spine. Back sleepers should ditch the thick pillow and opt for a small one under the neck.
Exercise and Tone Your Abs
8/9
Too many pounds around your belly puts added stress on your back. You need strong muscles to support your spine. A well-designed workout plan will keep your body and spine in tip-top shape. And that's important. Try non-impact exercises like tai chi.
Check for Problems
9/9
You probably know if you slouch or not. If you aren’t sure, here's a quick way to tell. Place the back of your head against a wall. Move your feet 6 inches out from the baseboard. Your tush should touch the wall. Your lower back and your neck should be about 2 inches from it. If not, talk to your doctor about ways to improve your posture.
Show Sources

**5.** <https://www.spine-health.com/wellness/ergonomics/ten-tips-improving-posture-and-ergonomics>

Ten Tips for Improving Posture and Ergonomics
Peer Reviewed
Over time, poor posture may be caused by habits from everyday activities such as sitting in office chairs, staring at the computer, cradling a cell phone, carrying a purse over same shoulder, driving, prolonged standing, caring for small children, or even sleeping.
See Office Chair, Posture, and Driving Ergonomics
Poor posture can easily become second nature, causing and aggravating episodes of back and neck pain and damaging spinal structures. Fortunately, the main factors affecting posture and ergonomics are completely within one's ability to control and are not difficult to change.
The following guidelines suggest several ways to improve posture and ergonomics, especially for people who work sitting in an office chair for most of the day.
Identify the warning signs of back pain caused by poor ergonomics and posture
Back pain may be the result of poor ergonomics and posture if the back pain is worse at certain times of day or week (such as after a long day of sitting in an office chair in front of a computer, but not during the weekends); pain that starts in the neck and moves downwards into the upper back, lower back, and extremities; pain that goes away after switching positions; sudden back pain that is experienced with a new job, a new office chair, or a new car; and/or back pain that comes and goes for months.
advertisement
Keep the body in alignment while sitting in an office chair and while standing
When standing, distribute body weight evenly to the front, back, and sides of the feet. While sitting in an office chair, take advantage of the chair's features. Sit up straight and align the ears, shoulders, and hips in one vertical line. Any prolonged sitting position, even a good one, can be tiring. Shifting forward to the edge of the seat with a straight back can alternate with sitting back against the support of the office chair to ease the work of back muscles.
Five More Tips for Reducing Back Pain at the Office
Use posture-friendly props and ergonomic office chairs when sitting
Supportive ergonomic "props" can help to take the strain and load off of the spine. Ergonomic office chairs or chairs with an adjustable back support can be used at work.
Footrests, portable lumbar back supports, or even a towel or small pillow can be used while sitting in an office chair, on soft furniture and while driving.
Using purses, bags, and backpacks that are designed to minimize back strain can also influence good posture.
Proper corrective eyewear, positioning computer screens to your natural, resting eye position can also help to avoid leaning or straining the neck with the head tilted forward.
advertisement
Increase awareness of posture and ergonomics in everyday settings
Becoming aware of posture and ergonomics at work, at home, and at play is a vital step towards instilling good posture and ergonomic techniques. This includes making conscious connections between episodes of back pain and specific situations where poor posture or ergonomics may be the root cause of the pain.

**6.** <https://www.shape.com/lifestyle/mind-and-body/how-to-improve-posture>

Email
Photo: Megan Falk
When you meet a stranger, the first thing that catches your eye might be their Michelle Obama-level defined biceps or their swoon-worthy smile. But I've long thought one of my most prominent physical characteristics — besides my undeniably Scandinavian blonde hair and blue eyes — is my poor posture.
Slouching is a bad habit I've dealt with for the majority of my life. As a teenager, my brother would pester me about my constant slumping (I like to think it was out of love). In ninth grade, my gym teacher reprimanded me for my arched back, grabbing my shoulders and forcibly pushing them back into their "proper" place. Even now as a full-fledged adult with an office job, I've caught myself sinking further and further down into my desk chair until my eyes are nearly level with the keyboard.
All the teasing and unsolicited advice over the years has turned my posture into the greatest source of my self-consciousness, and I've tried again and again to correct it. I've gone through day-long spurts of holding my shoulders back, only to relapse to my slouching state the next day with a side of mild back pain. Heck, I've made it my New Year's resolution (and failed to actually follow through on it) every year since I was 17.
I'm not alone in my struggle to maintain proper posture, either. According to a 2019 national survey , 47 percent of people say they are concerned about their posture and its impact on their health. But that might not even be the full picture: "I think everyone has issues [with posture] if you think about it," says Karen Joubert, P.T., D.P.T. , owner of Joubert Physical Therapy .
Even though slumping over in a desk chair and walking around with rounded shoulders feels more comfortable, and frankly easier, than teaching myself the best way to correct my posture, it's not doing my health — or yours, if you feel the same — any favors. At the very least, all this slouching can make you feel fatigued when you're simply sitting, lead to headaches and slight pain, or cause numbness and tingling in the legs and arms, says Joubert. "When you're sitting there for periods of time, you also start leaning forward and compressing the diaphragm. You won't be getting proper air and oxygen, and that's why we feel fatigued," she explains.
But it can also lead to serious health implications — slumping over can wear away at the spine, making it more fragile and prone to injury; cause back, neck, and shoulder pain; decrease flexibility; and misalign the entire musculoskeletal system, according to the U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM) . Why? Think of your head like a 10-pound bowling ball — when you lean forward, the gravitational pull on the head increases, which can cause the weight of the head to put up to 60 pounds of pressure on your shoulders, says Joubert.TL;DR: Even a slight misalignment can place unnecessary strain on your body.
What Is "Good Posture," Exactly?
Technically speaking, posture is how you hold your body while standing, sitting, or lying down. Good posture involves maintaining, but not increasing, the natural curves of your spine at your neck, mid-back, and low-back, according to the NLM . Though models and celebrities look like they're walking around with boards strapped to their backs, trying to replicate their posture isn't your best bet. "Posture is unique to everyone. It's different from your neighbors and best friends," says Joubert.
And if you do slouch, your genes are probably not to blame, says Lindsay Newitter , an AmSAT-certified teacher (a certification from the American Society for the Alexander Technique, which is a method of changing faulty postural habits) and owner of the Posture Police . Instead, it's due to a structural issue (think: scoliosis) or habits you've developed over time, she explains.These posture-wrecking patterns can start to develop as early as elementary school, when you're a small kid working at a desk made for someone twice your size. Without your feet on the floor, you learn to use your upper body to hold yourself up and lift your shoulders to reach your desk, says Newitter. In your adolescent years, you might develop social anxieties or insecurities that make you self-conscious, which can further worsen your posture. Add in all those hours you spend sitting as an adult, and maintaining poor posture becomes as second nature as brushing your teeth.
So How Do You Find \*Your\* Best Posture?
Even though your friends and family have good intentions when they tell you to stand up straight, it's not as simple as that. "A lot of people think, at least from what I encounter, that they hold their body in the wrong position," says Newitter. "To fix it, they try to hold it in the right position. Neither of these are helpful. Good posture is having a full range of motion in joints and being able to easily find a place that's centered and neutral," she explains. In fact, pushing your shoulders back and tucking your pelvis can do more harm than good, resulting in "backward slouching" and unnecessary strain, says Newitter.
The following tips from Joubert and Newitter, however, will help you find the natural posture that's best for your body. If you make an effort to improve your positioning and consistently correct any flaws, you can start seeing changes in your posture in as little as a month, says Joubert.
Trying to break a nearly life-long habit of slouching and then practicing a new position can be overwhelming and frustrating — but it doesn't have to be. To avoid getting discouraged, start by focusing on one or two things, such as the positioning of your shoulders or weight distribution, then building upon them, recommends Joubert. (Using these tips can help you achieve your goals too.) Remember, if you're feeling any pain or discomfort while adjusting your posture, make an appointment with a physical therapist, who can give you guidance and help you prevent injury.
The Best Way to Correct Posture While Standing
Step 1: Start standing with feet shoulders-width apart. Distribute weight equally in the balls of both feet.
Step 2: Gently pull lower abdominal muscles up and in, as if moving the belly button toward the backbone, to achieve a neutral spine. (Another way to picture this is to imagine slightly tucking the stomach in.)
Step 3: Gently lower shoulder blades back and down as if tucking them into pants' pockets.
Step 4: Adjust body so knees are pointed forward and relaxed or slightly bent. Align knees over feet, hips over knees, and shoulders over hips.
Step 5: Let arms hang naturally at sides.
Step 6: Look straight forward and keep head level so that earlobes are parallel with shoulders. Avoid pushing head forward, backward, or to the side.
Step 7: Scratch the top of the head to bring awareness there. Picture an arrow shooting straight up from that point on the head. This visualization will help in lifting the chin so that it is parallel to the floor and in ensuriing that the body is standing tall.
The Best Way to Correct Posture While Sitting
Step 1: Start sitting with butt touching the back of the chair and feet resting on the ground, with bodyweight equally distributed. If feet can't reach due to the chair height, use a footplate or an ergonomic footrest (Buy It, $24, bedbathandbeyond.com ). If necessary, a cookbook or puzzle box can pass for a makeshift footrest. Knees should be at or below hip level.
Step 2: Position heels directly underneath knees. Knees should form a 90-degree angle.
Step 3: Align shoulders directly over hips. Keep elbows bent at a 90-degree angle.
Step 4: Lower or raise the computer monitor so that it is at eye level.
Remember how sitting in one spot for long periods can cause fatigue? Well, that's why it's important to get up and move every 30 minutes, even if you sit with perfect posture, says Joubert.Go for a walk around your office, march in place, or do shoulder rolls to keep your body loose and invigorated. (

**7.** <https://medlineplus.gov/guidetogoodposture.html>

Guide to Good Posture
URL of this page: https://medlineplus.gov/guidetogoodposture.html
Guide to Good Posture
Summary
Good posture is about more than standing up straight so you can look your best. It is an important part of your long-term health. Making sure that you hold your body the right way, whether you are moving or still, can prevent pain, injuries, and other health problems.
What is posture?
Posture is how you hold your body. There are two types:
Dynamic posture is how you hold yourself when you are moving, like when you are walking, running, or bending over to pick up something.
Static posture is how you hold yourself when you are not moving, like when you are sitting, standing, or sleeping.
It is important to make sure that you have good dynamic and static posture.
The key to good posture is the position of your spine. Your spine has three natural curves - at your neck, mid back, and low back. Correct posture should maintain these curves, but not increase them. Your head should be above your shoulders, and the top of your shoulder should be over the hips.
How can posture affect my health?
Poor posture can be bad for your health. Slouching or slumping over can:
Misalign your musculoskeletal system
Cause neck, shoulder, and back pain
Decrease your flexibility
Affect how well your joints move
Affect your balance and increase your risk of falling
Make it harder to digest your food
Make it harder to breathe
How can I improve my posture in general?
Be mindful of your posture during everyday activities, like watching television, washing dishes, or walking
Stay active. Any kind of exercise may help improve your posture, but certain types of exercises can be especially helpful. They include yoga, tai chi, and other classes that focuses on body awareness. It is also a good idea to do exercises that strengthen your core (muscles around your back, abdomen, and pelvis).
Maintain a healthy weight. Extra weight can weaken your abdominal muscles, cause problems for your pelvis and spine, and contribute to low back pain. All of these can hurt your posture.
Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes. High heels, for example, can throw off your balance and force you to walk differently. This puts more stress on your muscles and harms your posture.
Make sure work surfaces are at a comfortable height for you, whether you're sitting in front of a computer, making dinner, or eating a meal.
How can I improve my posture when sitting?
Many Americans spend a lot of their time sitting - either at work, at school, or at home. It is important to sit properly, and to take frequent breaks:
Switch sitting positions often
Take brief walks around your office or home
Gently stretch your muscles every so often to help relieve muscle tension
Don't cross your legs; keep your feet on the floor, with your ankles in front of your knees
Make sure that your feet touch the floor, or if that's not possible, use a footrest
Relax your shoulders; they should not be rounded or pulled backwards
Keep your elbows in close to your body. They should be bent between 90 and 120 degrees.
Make sure that your back is fully supported. Use a back pillow or other back support if your chair does not have a backrest that can support your lower back's curve.
Make sure that your thighs and hips are supported. You should have a well-padded seat, and your thighs and hips should be parallel to the floor.
How can I improve my posture when standing?
Stand up straight and tall
Keep your shoulders back
Put your weight mostly on the balls of your feet
Keep your head level

**8.** <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/325883>

Good posture may help reduce back pain and stress on the muscles.
The following guidelines describe good posture when standing, sitting, and lying down:
Standing
Stand with your feet flat on the floor, shoulder width apart.
Stand tall, as if a string is pulling upward from your head, and let your arms relax by your sides.
Pull your belly button gently toward your spine.
Keep your chin parallel with the floor.
Sitting at a desk or table
Sit with your back straight and shoulders back.
Keep your feet flat on the floor. Do not cross your legs or ankles.
Rest your forearms on the table while keeping your shoulders back.
Your chin should be parallel to the floor, and your ears should align with your collar bone.
Lying down
People can have good posture while lying on their back or side. Make sure to keep the spine aligned and avoid twisting at the waist. Placing a pillow underneath or between the legs can help relieve back pain.
People should avoid sleeping on their stomachs because this position forces the neck to twist, putting excessive stress on the neck, shoulders, and back.
Maintaining proper posture requires adequate muscle strength, joint motion, and balance, according to the American Chiropractic Association .
The following exercises focus on increasing muscle strength and flexibility for better posture.
Bridges
Bridges help strengthen the gluteal and abdominal muscles, which helps relieve excess stress in the lower back.
To do a bridge:
Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor.
Lift your hips by engaging your core and buttocks muscles. The buttocks and lower back should raise off the ground.
Gently lower back down to the starting position.
Plank
Plank Pose helps improve posture by strengthening muscles in the shoulders and back as well as the core, glutes, and hamstrings. It also encourages proper alignment of the spine.
To plank:
Get down onto your hands and knees. Make sure that your hands align with your shoulders and your knees align with your hips.
Come onto the balls of the feet by lifting your heels and straightening your legs. The body should form a straight line.
Keep your chest open and shoulders back.
Hold this position for 30–60 seconds.
Hip flexor stretch
This stretch gently opens the hips and improves balance and coordination, which can help improve posture.
To do a hip flexor stretch:
Kneel with your right knee on the ground.
Place your left foot in front and bend your knee at a 90-degree angle.
Keep your back straight, chest forward, and head upright.
Place both hands on your left thigh.
Gently press your hips forward and hold the position for 20–30 seconds.
Repeat this stretch on the right side.
Mountain Pose
Tadasana, or Mountain Pose, is a simple yoga position that can help improve posture. Mountain Pose focuses on upright body alignment, and it incorporates several aspects of good posture.
To do Mountain Pose:
Stand upright with the feet hip width apart.
Make sure to spread your weight evenly through both feet. Try gently rocking forward and backward to feel how variations in weight distribution affect posture.
Keep a slight bend in your knees, squeeze your thighs, and tilt your tailbone down.
Drop your shoulders down and back, so your chest comes forward
Keep your shoulders relaxed and allow your arms to fall to the sides of the body with your palms facing forward.
Inhale and exhale slowly for a few breaths.
Child’s Pose
This yoga pose lengthens the lower back and opens the hips. People can use Child’s Pose as a resting position during yoga or other forms of exercise or as part of their regular stretching routine.
To do Child’s Pose:
Get down onto your hands and knees.
Gently lean your body backward, keeping your hands in the same position.
Continue leaning back until your forehead touches the floor.
Your arms should make a straight line and your buttocks should rest on your heels.
Keep your arms straight and shoulders relaxed.
Placing a mat or towel on the floor can make this pose more comfortable.
2018 study
. People who sit for long periods tend to slouch in their chairs.
Slouching happens when the shoulders drop in front of the chest and the head tilts forward. This posture puts an extreme curve in the spine, placing stress on the neck and constricting the lungs. People may also appear smaller if they slouch while standing.
A person can correct their posture by pulling their shoulders back and keeping their head upright, in line with their spine.
Sitting for many hours may be unavoidable, but a person can maintain good posture. Here are a few ways to improve posture while seated:
Switch sitting positions often.
Also, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommend the following general tips for improving posture:
Be aware of posture during everyday activities, such as walking, watching television, and doing chores.
Stay active by taking part in regular exercise, involving cardio, strength training, or stretching.
Maintain a healthy weight, as extra weight can weaken the abdominal muscles and put stress on the joints and ligaments.
Wear comfortable, low heeled shoes that have arch support. High heeled shoes alter a person’s center of gravity, which can put more stress on the muscles and joints, especially in the knees.
Position desks and tables at the correct height if using them for working or eating.
The term “posture” describes the position of the body when standing, sitting, and lying down. Slouching and hunching forward can lead to poor posture, which may cause joint and muscle pain.
General tips for good posture include:
keeping your shoulders back and chest forward
holding your head upright, in line with your spine
avoiding twisting at the waist
keeping the body’s weight distributed evenly among both feet and hips
Having good posture can improve self-confidence and may provide several health benefits, such as:
reduced back pain

**9.** <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/is-it-too-late-to-save-your-posture>

Is it too late to save your posture?
April 7, 2022
Even if your posture has been a problem for years, it’s possible to make improvements.
Rounded shoulders and a hunched stance may seem like they’re set in stone by the time we reach a certain age, and you may feel you’ve missed the boat for better posture. But there’s a good chance you can still stand up taller.
"It’s not as hard as you may think. Better posture is often just a matter of changing your activities and strengthening your muscles," says Saloni Doshi, a physical therapist with Harvard-affiliated Brigham and Women’s Hospital.
What causes posture problems?
Poor posture often stems from modern-day habits like working in front of a computer, slouching on a couch while watching TV, or looking down at a smartphone. Poor posture could also be due to many hours spent carrying heavy objects (like equipment at work, grocery bags, or a heavy purse).
All of these activities can make you stoop or bring your shoulders forward. "This overstretches and weakens the muscles in the back of your shoulders, and shortens the muscles in the front of your shoulders and in your chest. Gravity then pulls the muscles forward, because the muscles are too weak to pull them back up," Doshi explains.
If the core muscles in your back and abdomen have grown weak from inactivity, that can also cause you to lean forward. Those muscles are crucial to lifting your frame and keeping you upright.
Another cause of poor posture, as we reported in September, comes from broken bones in your back. People with brittle bones ( osteoporosis ) may experience compression fractures when the bones in the back (vertebrae) aren’t strong enough to support the load placed on them. The bone collapses on the front side, the part closest to the chest. As collapsed vertebrae stack up, the spine becomes rounded and bends forward, a condition called dowager’s hump (dorsal kyphosis).
Poor posture consequences
"Sometimes people ask, ‘Why should I change my posture? I don’t mind it.’ But one of the big things that happens with forward posture is that your center of gravity goes forward. This increases the risk of falling," Doshi says.
Poor posture can also cause back or neck pain , headaches, trouble breathing, or trouble walking. "Back and neck pain seem to be the most common," Doshi says.
Move of the month: Seated chest stretch
Sit up straight facing sideways in a chair. Clasp your hands behind you, locking your fingers so your palms face you. Lift your hands upward to the point of tightness. Hold 10 seconds and return to the starting position. Repeat two to four times.
Photo by Michael Carroll
Perk up your posture
If you have a spinal cord injury or you’ve had surgery to fuse or remove bones in your back, there may be some limitations to your posture improvement.
Otherwise, Doshi says, it’s usually not too late to correct posture, even if you’ve had broken vertebrae (once they’ve healed and your doctor says it’s okay). "In that case, we’d try to prevent fractures in other segments of your back," she says. "We can’t change bones, but we can change muscle mass."
Tips to stand taller
The key to fixing poor posture is strengthening and stretching the muscles in the upper back, chest, and core.
Shoulder strengtheners include scapula squeezes (squeezing your shoulder blades together for 30 seconds at a time) and rows (using a resistance band to pull back your elbows like you’re rowing).
Core strengtheners include modified planks (in which you hold a push-up position while propped up on your elbows) or simply tightening your abdominal muscles, pulling your navel in toward your spine.
An easy way to stretch your chest muscles: simply put your arms behind your back, grasp both elbows (or forearms if that’s as far as you can reach), and hold the position.
You’ll also have to work on your posture in everyday activities. A simple trick when you’re sitting (even watching TV): "Put a rolled towel behind your shoulders. It makes you sit up straight so the towel won’t fall," Doshi suggests.
Cut down on activities that have led to poor posture, too. Take breaks from computer and TV time, and exercise more. "In six to 12 weeks," says Doshi, "you’ll see an improvement in your posture."
Image: © Ridofranz/Getty Images

**10.** <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/4485-back-health-and-posture>

Contact Us
What is posture?
Posture is the position in which you hold your body while standing, sitting or lying down. Good posture involves training your body to stand, walk, sit and lie so as to place the least strain on muscles and ligaments while you are moving or performing weight-bearing activities.
Good posture helps you in the following ways:
Keeps bones and joints in the correct position (alignment) so that muscles are being used properly.
Helps cut down on the wear and tear of joint surfaces (such as the knee) to help prevent the onset of arthritis .
Decreases the strain on the ligaments in the spine.
Prevents the spine from becoming fixed in abnormal positions.
Prevents fatigue because muscles are being used more efficiently, which allows the body to use less energy.
Prevents backache and muscular pain.
Correct sitting position
Sit up with your back straight and your shoulders back. Your buttocks should touch the back of your chair.
All 3 normal back curves should be present while sitting. You can use a small, rolled-up towel or a lumbar roll to help maintain the normal curves in your back.
Sit at the end of your chair and slouch completely.
Draw yourself up and accentuate the curve of your back as far as possible. Hold for a few seconds.
Release the position slightly (about 10 degrees). This is a good sitting posture.
Distribute your body weight evenly on both hips.
Bend your knees at a right angle. Keep your knees even with or slightly higher than your hips. (Use a foot rest or stool if necessary.) Do not cross your legs.
Keep your feet flat on the floor.
Try to avoid sitting in the same position for more than 30 minutes.
At work, adjust your chair height and work station so that you can sit up close to your work and tilt it up toward you. Rest your elbows and arms on your chair or desk, keeping your shoulders relaxed.
When sitting in a chair that rolls and pivots, don't twist at the waist while sitting. Instead, turn your whole body.
When standing up from the sitting position, move to the front of the chair. Stand up by straightening your legs. Avoid bending forward at your waist. Immediately stretch your back by doing 10 standing backbends.
Here's how to find a good sitting position when you're not using a back support or lumbar roll:
Distribute your body weight evenly on both hips.
Bend your knees at a right angle. Keep your knees even with or slightly higher than your hips. (Use a foot rest or stool if necessary.) Do not cross your legs.
Keep your feet flat on the floor.
Try to avoid sitting in the same position for more than 30 minutes.
At work, adjust your chair height and work station so you can sit up close to your work and tilt it up at you. Rest your elbows and arms on your chair or desk, keeping your shoulders relaxed.
When sitting in a chair that rolls and pivots, don't twist at the waist while sitting. Instead, turn your whole body.
When standing up from the sitting position, move to the front of the chair. Stand up by straightening your legs. Avoid bending forward at your waist. Immediately stretch your back by doing 10 standing backbends.
Correct driving position
Use a back support (lumbar roll) at the curve of your back. Your knees should be at the same level or higher than your hips.
Move the seat close to the steering wheel to support the curve of your back. The seat should be close enough to allow your knees to bend and your feet to reach the pedals.
Correct lifting position
If you must lift objects, do not try to lift objects that are awkward or are heavier than 30 pounds.
Before you lift a heavy object, make sure you have firm footing.
To pick up an object that is lower than the level of your waist, keep your back straight and bend at your knees and hips. Do not bend forward at the waist with your knees straight
Stand with a wide stance close to the object you are trying to pick up and keep your feet firm on the ground. Tighten your stomach muscles and lift the object using your leg muscles. Straighten your knees in a steady motion. Don't jerk the object up to your body.
Stand completely upright without twisting. Always move your feet forward when lifting an object.
If you are lifting an object from a table, slide it to the edge to the table so that you can hold it close to your body. Bend your knees so that you are close to the object. Use your legs to lift the object and come to a standing position.
Avoid lifting heavy objects above waist level.
Hold packages close to your body with your arms bent. Keep your stomach muscles tight. Take small steps and go slowly.
To lower the object, place your feet as you did to lift, tighten stomach muscles and bend your hips and knees.
What is the best position for sleeping and lying down?
No matter what position you lie in, the pillow should be under your head, but not your shoulders, and should be a thickness that allows your head to be in a normal position.
Try to sleep in a position that helps you maintain the curve in your back (such as on your back with a pillow under your knees or a lumbar roll under your lower back, or on your side with your knees slightly bent). Do not sleep on your side with your knees drawn up to your chest. You may want to avoid sleeping on your stomach, especially on a saggy mattress, since this can cause back strain and can be uncomfortable for your neck.
Select a firm mattress and box spring set that does not sag. If necessary, place a board under your mattress. You can also place the mattress on the floor temporarily if necessary. If you've always slept on a soft surface, it may be more painful to change to a hard surface. Take the time to find the right mattress and box spring for your needs.
Try using a back support (lumbar support) at night to make you more comfortable. A rolled sheet or towel tied around your waist may be helpful.
When standing up from the lying position, turn on your side, draw up both knees and swing your legs on the side of the bed. Sit up by pushing yourself up with your hands. Avoid bending forward at your waist.
These recommendations will benefit most people who have back pain. If any of these guidelines causes an increase of pain or the spreading of pain to the legs, stop the activity and seek the advice of a physician, chiropractor or physical therapist.
Share

**good posture**

**1.** <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/how-to-improve-your-posture>

How to improve your posture
7-minute read
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What is good posture?
Posture is how you sit or stand. Good posture positions the body correctly and makes sure your weight is evenly balanced. This means that the skeleton, muscles and ligaments aren’t overstretched or strained.
Good posture makes sure your spine has three curves. It also keeps the muscles on each side of the spine strong and well balanced. It will help prevent pain in your back, and may make you more mobile and less tired.
You can use good posture while you are sitting and standing. Make sure you relax and breathe normally.
Good posture makes sure your spine has three curves.
Good standing posture doesn’t mean to be stiff or rigid. You should stand loosely and flexibly with your:
back straight
head up, chin in and looking straight ahead
shoulders relaxed
weight balanced evenly on your two feet
knees straight
When you are sitting, your back should be against the back of the chair. Your knees should make a right angle, with your feet on the floor. It’s important to avoid crossing your legs.
Practicing good posture will help prevent discomfort such as muscle , back , and neck pain .
Correct posture is important for maintaining a healthy spine. When seated at your desk, make sure that your back is against the chair and your feet are on the floor.
What causes poor posture?
Problems with posture can also be caused by conditions that weaken one or more of the structures that support the body. These structures include your:
neck
back muscles
abdominal wall
In some cases, people are born with genetic conditions that affect the shape of the spine and hips. This can influence posture from birth. Such conditions can be managed to reduce the harmful effects they can have on posture over time.
In other cases, injuries from sports or other activities can affect your posture as the body protects itself from more injury, such as by limping when you have hurt your foot.
Often, our posture changes as a result of the work we do, or other activities that lead to overuse of different parts of the body.
Underuse can also be a problem. For example, weak back muscles on either side of the spine, can affect our ability to maintain a good posture. The same applies to the muscles in the abdominal wall at the front of our bodies.
For many people, sitting for many hours each day year in and year out causes muscles and ligaments to tighten or become weaker. This can also lead to poor posture.
General tips to improve your posture
Exercise regularly — even 30 minutes of low impact exercise a day will keep your body supple and active. This will also help you improve your general health.
Gentle exercises, such as those in yoga and Pilates, help to strengthen the support muscles in your back and stomach. These exercises can help with posture correction. Concentrate on strengthening the muscles in your core (torso and pelvis).
Spend 10 minutes a day doing simple stretching exercises to improve your posture.
Stand tall. This means straightening your spine, moving your shoulders down to their natural resting position and gently tightening your stomach muscles.
Do simple head movements to help loosen tightened neck muscles that can interfere with good posture. Try gently moving your head in small circles, or from front to back and side to side.
Lie flat on the ground for two to three minutes once a day. Do this exercise without using any cushions or support, and relax. This will allow your body to readjust to its natural resting position, and help correct your posture.
Wear flat, well-fitting shoes to assist with even weight distribution.
Make sure you lift using your hips, knees and thighs, not your back.
How to improve your posture at home
Try not to cross your legs when seated as it can overstretch one side of your leg muscles. This can change the alignment of your spine over time, particularly if you always cross your legs the same way.
Don’t spend too long sitting on low-seated sofas or very soft chairs.
When sleeping, try to use a single firm support pillow. This can prevent neck pain developing. It’s best to lie on your side with your knees bent. Make sure you also have a supportive mattress.
Take care when carrying heavy things, for example bags of books, computer equipment or shopping. Make sure that you distribute the weight of your bags evenly on either side of your body. A backpack distributes weight evenly over your shoulders.
If you are a carer and spend a lot of time lifting, pushing or carrying the person you care for, make sure you look after your own posture. Undertake such physical activities correctly.
How to improve your posture at work
When seated, keep your back straight and your feet flat on the ground. Try to keep your knees and your hips level. You may need a footrest to keep your hips and knees level. If you sit for long periods, you should support your lower back against the back of your chair. This can be done with a small rolled up towel, or commercial product.
Avoid sitting in a hunched position for long periods of time, such as when using a laptop or desktop computer. Make sure you get up and move around at regular intervals to alter your body position.
If your job involves lots of repetitive tasks or lifting and bending, ask your employer about training in the correct way to lift and carry heavy, bulky or awkward objects.
If you spend a lot of time on the telephone, you run the risk of phone strain. Resting a telephone on your shoulder can twist your neck while keep the phone in place. You may find a headset is more comfortable.
How to improve your posture when driving
Make sure your car seat and headrest are in the correct position to promote safe, comfortable driving.
The steering wheel should be adjusted so it’s level with your chest, not your face. Keep your arms bent and your thumbs on the rim of the steering wheel. Have the seat upright so your back and shoulders are supported. Sit deep in the seat, bracing your body with your left foot. Exercise this to improve your posture while travelling.
Sources:

**2.** <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/multimedia/back-pain/sls-20076817>

Slide show: Prevent back pain with good posture
Previous Next 1 of 9 Why is good posture important?
When it comes to posture, your mother knew best. Her reminders to stop slouching were good advice.
When you practice proper posture, you keep your bones and joints in alignment. This decreases the abnormal wearing of joint surfaces, reduces stress on the ligaments holding the spinal joints together and allows your muscles to work more efficiently. Good posture can also help prevent muscle strain, overuse disorders, and back and muscular pain.
It all adds up
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Products and Services

**3.** <https://medlineplus.gov/guidetogoodposture.html>

Guide to Good Posture
URL of this page: https://medlineplus.gov/guidetogoodposture.html
Guide to Good Posture
Summary
Good posture is about more than standing up straight so you can look your best. It is an important part of your long-term health. Making sure that you hold your body the right way, whether you are moving or still, can prevent pain, injuries, and other health problems.
What is posture?
Posture is how you hold your body. There are two types:
Dynamic posture is how you hold yourself when you are moving, like when you are walking, running, or bending over to pick up something.
Static posture is how you hold yourself when you are not moving, like when you are sitting, standing, or sleeping.
It is important to make sure that you have good dynamic and static posture.
The key to good posture is the position of your spine. Your spine has three natural curves - at your neck, mid back, and low back. Correct posture should maintain these curves, but not increase them. Your head should be above your shoulders, and the top of your shoulder should be over the hips.
How can posture affect my health?
Poor posture can be bad for your health. Slouching or slumping over can:
Misalign your musculoskeletal system
Cause neck, shoulder, and back pain
Decrease your flexibility
Affect how well your joints move
Affect your balance and increase your risk of falling
Make it harder to digest your food
Make it harder to breathe
How can I improve my posture in general?
Be mindful of your posture during everyday activities, like watching television, washing dishes, or walking
Stay active. Any kind of exercise may help improve your posture, but certain types of exercises can be especially helpful. They include yoga, tai chi, and other classes that focuses on body awareness. It is also a good idea to do exercises that strengthen your core (muscles around your back, abdomen, and pelvis).
Maintain a healthy weight. Extra weight can weaken your abdominal muscles, cause problems for your pelvis and spine, and contribute to low back pain. All of these can hurt your posture.
Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes. High heels, for example, can throw off your balance and force you to walk differently. This puts more stress on your muscles and harms your posture.
Make sure work surfaces are at a comfortable height for you, whether you're sitting in front of a computer, making dinner, or eating a meal.
How can I improve my posture when sitting?
Many Americans spend a lot of their time sitting - either at work, at school, or at home. It is important to sit properly, and to take frequent breaks:
Switch sitting positions often
Take brief walks around your office or home
Gently stretch your muscles every so often to help relieve muscle tension
Don't cross your legs; keep your feet on the floor, with your ankles in front of your knees
Make sure that your feet touch the floor, or if that's not possible, use a footrest
Relax your shoulders; they should not be rounded or pulled backwards
Keep your elbows in close to your body. They should be bent between 90 and 120 degrees.
Make sure that your back is fully supported. Use a back pillow or other back support if your chair does not have a backrest that can support your lower back's curve.
Make sure that your thighs and hips are supported. You should have a well-padded seat, and your thighs and hips should be parallel to the floor.
How can I improve my posture when standing?
Stand up straight and tall
Keep your shoulders back
Put your weight mostly on the balls of your feet
Keep your head level

**4.** <https://www.webmd.com/osteoporosis/ss/slideshow-posture-tips>

Medically Reviewed by Melinda Ratini, DO, MS on May 04, 2022
Don't Be a Slouch
1/9
It adds to the stress on your spine. That puts a strain on the bones, muscles, and joints you need to hold your backbone in place. But lousy posture isn't just bad for your back. A constant slump smashes your inside organs together, and makes it harder for your lungs and intestines to work. Over time, that’ll make it hard to digest food or get enough air when you breathe.
Straighten Up
2/9
A great way to prevent posture problems? Stand up tall. You'll feel better and look better -- slimmer, even. Pretend you’re standing against a wall to measure your height. Hold your head straight and tuck in your chin. Your ears should be over the middle of your shoulders. Stand with your shoulders back, knees straight, and belly tucked in. Don't let your booty or hips stick out. Straighten up so you feel like your head stretches toward the sky.
Don't Slump at Your Desk
3/9
It's comfy to slouch -- maybe even lean back and swivel a bit. But it’s a posture no-no. Try this instead: Sit all the way back in your chair. Place a small, rolled-up towel or lumbar cushion behind your mid-back to protect your spine's natural curve. Bend your knees at a right angle and keep them the same height, or a bit higher, than your hips. Place your feet flat on the floor.
Beware of 'Text Neck'
4/9
On your smartphone all day long? Take a minute to stretch your neck. When you tilt your head down to check messages it really strains your spine. Over the course of a day -- or year -- that can add up. For a better view, lift the phone up and move your eyes, not your head.
Don't Be a Low-Rider
5/9
Sure, it's cool and comfy to recline during a long drive. But it isn’t great for your posture. Instead, consider sitting more upright. Try not to lock your legs. Bend your knees slightly. They should be at hip level or a tad above. Don't forget to put a pillow or rolled-up towel behind you for support.
Save Heels for a Big Night Out
6/9
They might be a fashion yes, but they’re likely a posture no. Pumps and stilettos thrust the base of your spine forward, which over-arches your back. That can change the way your backbone lines up and put pressure on nerves, which causes back pain. Sky-high shoes also put more weight on your knees. Choose a lower, chunky heel for daily wear.
Hit the Hay the Right Way
7/9
Naptime is no excuse to slack. Skip the soft, saggy mattress. Choose a firm one that helps hold your spine's natural shape. Side sleeper? Bend your knees slightly but don't hug them. Place a pillow under your head so it's level with your spine. Back sleepers should ditch the thick pillow and opt for a small one under the neck.
Exercise and Tone Your Abs
8/9
Too many pounds around your belly puts added stress on your back. You need strong muscles to support your spine. A well-designed workout plan will keep your body and spine in tip-top shape. And that's important. Try non-impact exercises like tai chi.
Check for Problems
9/9
You probably know if you slouch or not. If you aren’t sure, here's a quick way to tell. Place the back of your head against a wall. Move your feet 6 inches out from the baseboard. Your tush should touch the wall. Your lower back and your neck should be about 2 inches from it. If not, talk to your doctor about ways to improve your posture.
Show Sources

**5.** <https://www.healthline.com/health/fitness-exercise/posture-benefits>

Medically reviewed by Daniel Bubnis, M.S., NASM-CPT, NASE Level II-CSS , Fitness — By Jenna Jonaitis — Updated on April 13, 2020
From our pain levels to our self-confidence, our posture impacts more than we think.
Putting in the effort to improve your posture has huge payoffs.
But what is good posture really?
“Good posture is also known as neutral spine. When we have good posture, the muscles surrounding the spine are balanced and supporting the body equally,” explains Nina Strang , physical therapist and certified strengthening and conditioning specialist at the University of Michigan.
Here’s a quick posture check-in: When sitting, your feet should rest flat on the floor, with even weight on both hips. Your back should be mostly straight (you’ll have natural curves in your lumbar, thoracic, and cervical areas). Your shoulders should be back but relaxed and your ears should line up over your collarbones.
When standing, your legs should have a slight knee bend so you’re not hyperextending or locking your knee joints, says Kara Griffith , exercise physiologist at Colorado Canyons Hospital & Medical Center.
Now that we know what good posture is, here are 12 key benefits along with tips to achieve them.
Sitting or standing in a slouched position for prolonged periods of time stresses your lower back. More specifically, it puts pressure on the posterior structures of the spine, including the intervertebral discs, facet points, ligaments, and muscles, explains Strang.
Do bridges to strengthen your lower back
Bridges strengthen and engage your gluteal and abdominal muscles, so your body relies on them instead of stressing your lower back.
via Gfycat
Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor, instructs Strang. Tighten your core without changing your back position. “Lift your hips and lower torso off of the ground by contracting your gluteus maximus muscles.” Slowly lower your hips back down.
Posture tip: Move around frequently—
every 20 to 30 minutes is recommended
. “No one is able to sit with perfect posture all of the time; it takes a lot of strength to do so. When you feel your muscles tiring, or yourself slowly slouching, get up and move around,” encourages Strang.
What to look for: Don’t anticipate a decrease in lower back pain on your first day. “Posture is something that you should expect to work at your whole life,” says Strang.
By stretching your chest, and strengthening your core and upper back muscles, you’ll see gradual but noticeable pain reduction.
“Poor posture can contribute to tension headaches , due to increased muscle tension in the back of the neck. Often if we correct our posture, we can reduce muscle tension and improve our headaches,” says Strang.
Stretch your neck muscles with a head retraction exercise
This exercise strengthens the neck muscles that are often weak and stretched out.
via Gfycat
Lie on the floor on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Pull your chin back toward the floor like you’re trying to make a double chin. Hold for 10 to 15 seconds and repeat 10 times.
Posture tip: Check in with your body often. “Awareness is essential to good posture. We get busy working at our computers or eating a good meal, and we compress into poor posture,” says Griffith. Post a note on your computer screen to remind you to get yourself in proper alignment.
What to look for: Headache prevention will differ from person to person. If you’re not experiencing the progress you want, incorporate more core exercises and pectoral stretches into your routine.
3. Increased energy levels
When your bones and joints are in correct alignment, it allows the muscles to be used as they’re intended, so you’ll have less fatigue and more energy , explains Griffith. In other words, “the muscles don’t have to work so hard to do what they’re supposed to do.”
Twist your torso to activate your side abs
Strengthen your obliques so the right muscles are activated when you’re sitting or standing.
via Gfycat
Start by sitting on the floor with your knees bent. Lift your feet off of the floor about 6 inches. Tighten your core as you rotate your upper body and elbows from side to side.
Posture tip: To keep your energy levels high, remember it’s okay to relax from time to time. “Give your postural muscles a break once in a while. They can get overworked and cause pain as well,” explains Strang.
What to look for: Noticing a spike in your energy levels is variable. It depends on how poor your posture is, how strong you are, and how aware you remain of your posture.
“You should notice improvement within a week, but if you want to make it habit, it may take a month for good posture to become natural,” says Griffith.
A forward head posture puts strain on the upper back, shoulder, and neck areas. With proper alignment, the joints and ligaments are less stressed and less subject to chronic overuse, explains Griffith.
Look in the mirror and perform this neck stretch
Stretch out your neck to relieve pressure and correct tension.
via Gfycat
Stand with a straight spine and neck. Slightly tuck your chin backward. You should feel a slight tensioning of your clavicle muscles and a lengthening of the posterior part of your neck. Hold for 3 seconds and complete 15 repetitions.
Posture tip: Set reminders on your calendar to check in with yourself several times throughout the day. Ensure your ears are above your shoulders and that you’re using your front neck muscles — not just your posterior muscles — to hold your head up.
What to look for: You’ll likely notice reduced tension in your shoulders and neck within the first week or two. Applying heat or ice may provide additional relief.
5. Decreased risk of abnormal wearing of the joint surfaces
Crooked sitting and standing, such as resting on one leg or side of your body, leads to hip strain. “Your joints wear down naturally over time. If your posture is even, not many problems arise. But if you’re uneven, more pain and issues tend to occur,” states Griffith.
Strengthen your core and lower back with this hip flexor stretch
This exercise strengthens your core and lower back at the same time while stretching your hip flexors .
via Gfycat
Start in a lunge position with one knee on the floor and your leg extended backward. The other leg should be at a 90-degree angle in front of you with your foot planted on the floor. Engage your core by pulling in slightly.
Posture tip: When sitting, “utilize a lumbar roll or rolled towel to support your natural lumbar curve,” suggests Strang. That way, you’ll have support for a straighter posture, allowing it to be more sustainable.
What to look for: The longer you work at strengthening your core and straightening your posture, the more natural and less challenging it will be.
“If you’re slouching, you’re compressing your lungs,” explains Griffith. “If you’re sitting and standing taller, your lungs have more space to expand.” In other words, good posture improves your breathing .
Push out the pecs to relieve your lungs
via Gfycat
Stand with your feet hip-width distance apart. Interlock your hands behind your back. Hold for 20 seconds to stretch your chest and pectoral muscles.
As an alternative, place your forearms along a door frame at shoulder height. “With one foot in front of the other, begin to shift your weight forward until you feel a stretch in your chest. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds,” recommends Strang.
Posture tip: “In a sitting position, rock your pelvis back and forth to determine how much available motion you have in your spine. Your ideal spinal posture will be in the middle of those ranges,” says Strang.
Another easy trick is to make sure most of the pressure is on your “sit bones” not your tailbone or the back of your thighs.
What to look for: “If we’re sitting slouched, it’s difficult for our diaphragm to fully contract and our lungs to fully expand,” Strang describes. For faster improvement, lengthen your seated position and open your lungs with three deep breaths several times a day.
Griffith explains: “If you’re compressing vital organs, your circulation is poor, and those organs aren’t going to work as well.” Healthy blood flow requires proper alignment and avoiding positions which cramp circulation, like crossing your legs.
Roll out your spine with a thoracic foam roll
via Gfycat
Lie on your back on the ground and place a firm foam roller in a horizontal position underneath you at the bottom of your rib cage. Support your neck with your arms.
Slowly extend your spine over the roller. Hold for 5 seconds and take a deep breath. Slowly move up 1 to 2 inches at a time.
Strang suggests performing this exercise daily.
Posture tip: “When sitting, scoot your hips all the way back into the chair. Your feet must be on the ground to improve support. You may use a lumbar roll along your low back to assist with maintaining this posture. Shoulders should be back and your neck muscles relaxed,” offers Strang.
When we have a forward head position, our mandibular joint and jaw muscles experience stress and tension. “This can contribute to pain with eating, talking, yawning, as well as clicking with opening, and headaches,” says Strang.
Loosen your jaw
via Gfycat
With your head and neck in a neutral position and your eyes looking forward, turn your head slowly from one side to the other to stretch your neck muscles.
Posture tip: Adjust the ergonomics at work and home to support a better posture. Find a more supportive chair, use a sit-to-stand desk, and purchase a lumbar roll that you can take wherever you go, suggests Strang.
What to look for: Releasing the tension in your neck and upper shoulders should reduce the effects of TMJ pain. Focus on relaxing your jaw throughout the day, especially in high-stress situations like driving during rush hour or focusing on a difficult work project.
As Strang describes, muscular effort is required to maintain good posture. If you’re holding a good posture, your core and upper back muscles will remain active and engaged.
Engage your back muscles with the overhead arm raise
via Gfycat
Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the ground with even weight on both hips. Engage your core by slightly tucking in and flattening your lower back. Let your arms fall to your sides comfortably. Raise them both up at the same time over your head and bring them back to the starting position.
Posture tip: “In a standing posture, keep your shoulders back and aligned. Engage your abdominals and keep a tiny knee bend so you’re not hyperextending or locking your knee joints,” explains Griffith.
Over time, your core strength will improve — helping to support the rest of your body.
What to look for: Your core will continue to strengthen every day if you engage it while you sit and stand properly.
Our posture doesn’t just affect us when we’re sitting and standing, but when we’re exercising, too. For example, having an engaged core and neutral spine during a squat will help prevent injury.
Try the tree pose
via Gfycat
Stand upright with your feet firmly planted on the ground. Bring your hands to meet in the middle of your chest with palms and fingers touching. Pull your shoulder blades back with your ears resting above your shoulders.
Lift one leg up to your thigh or shin (not your knee), and press the sole of your foot into your leg for stability. Both legs should be engaged, and your core should be tucked slightly as you maintain a neutral spine.
Posture tip: “Most of the environments we live and work in encourage us to do things in front of us, leading to more of a forward posture,” explains Strang. By focusing our attention on proper alignment, we improve our workout results and prevent injury.
What to look for: Focus on your core strength and pay attention to your balance. Over time, you’ll notice this position come with more easily and become a center for calm.
While it’s icing on the cake, good posture can make us more attractive. “People look taller and slimmer when they have good posture,” admits Griffith. Sometimes it can even make our abdominals appear more defined.
Flex with the forearm plank
via Gfycat
Lie on the floor with your frontside down. Keep your forearms parallel and your feet hip-width apart.
“Tighten your core and lift your torso off of the ground. Make sure you’re looking down between your elbows, your shoulder blades are pulled back, and your core muscles are tight. Don’t stick your hips in the air,” says Strang.
Hold your plank for up to 30 seconds, but stop sooner if your form starts to decline. Complete 3 sets.
Posture tip: Stand in front of a mirror with your normal posture. Look at yourself from all angles. Then, straighten your posture and notice the difference in how you look.
What to look for: Your appearance is one of the first aspects that will change when you practice good posture. It can be almost immediate. To make good posture a habit, continue to build the amount of time you stay in an aligned position throughout the day.
Not only can good posture boost your energy levels and reduce your pain, it can also increase your self-esteem. One 2009 study says good posture gives you more confidence in your own thoughts .
Practice the shoulder pull back
via Gfycat
Sit or stand with a neutral spine. Shift your shoulder blades to the back. Lift both forearms to a 90-degree angle at your sides. Pull your shoulder blades closer together, as if you’re squeezing them, while your arms naturally extend backward. Complete three sets of 12 reps.
Posture tip: Before a meeting, presentation, or job interview, make sure your shoulders are relaxed, your spine is in alignment, and your ears are resting over your shoulders.
What to look for: Feeling more confident in yourself can start from day one. Simply pay attention to your posture as you enter a room, sit down to a meal, or work on a project at your computer.
Up for a challenge? Aim to get all the benefits of good posture by trying our 30-day challenge !

**6.** <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/4485-back-health-and-posture>

Contact Us
What is posture?
Posture is the position in which you hold your body while standing, sitting or lying down. Good posture involves training your body to stand, walk, sit and lie so as to place the least strain on muscles and ligaments while you are moving or performing weight-bearing activities.
Good posture helps you in the following ways:
Keeps bones and joints in the correct position (alignment) so that muscles are being used properly.
Helps cut down on the wear and tear of joint surfaces (such as the knee) to help prevent the onset of arthritis .
Decreases the strain on the ligaments in the spine.
Prevents the spine from becoming fixed in abnormal positions.
Prevents fatigue because muscles are being used more efficiently, which allows the body to use less energy.
Prevents backache and muscular pain.
Correct sitting position
Sit up with your back straight and your shoulders back. Your buttocks should touch the back of your chair.
All 3 normal back curves should be present while sitting. You can use a small, rolled-up towel or a lumbar roll to help maintain the normal curves in your back.
Sit at the end of your chair and slouch completely.
Draw yourself up and accentuate the curve of your back as far as possible. Hold for a few seconds.
Release the position slightly (about 10 degrees). This is a good sitting posture.
Distribute your body weight evenly on both hips.
Bend your knees at a right angle. Keep your knees even with or slightly higher than your hips. (Use a foot rest or stool if necessary.) Do not cross your legs.
Keep your feet flat on the floor.
Try to avoid sitting in the same position for more than 30 minutes.
At work, adjust your chair height and work station so that you can sit up close to your work and tilt it up toward you. Rest your elbows and arms on your chair or desk, keeping your shoulders relaxed.
When sitting in a chair that rolls and pivots, don't twist at the waist while sitting. Instead, turn your whole body.
When standing up from the sitting position, move to the front of the chair. Stand up by straightening your legs. Avoid bending forward at your waist. Immediately stretch your back by doing 10 standing backbends.
Here's how to find a good sitting position when you're not using a back support or lumbar roll:
Distribute your body weight evenly on both hips.
Bend your knees at a right angle. Keep your knees even with or slightly higher than your hips. (Use a foot rest or stool if necessary.) Do not cross your legs.
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Correct driving position
Use a back support (lumbar roll) at the curve of your back. Your knees should be at the same level or higher than your hips.
Move the seat close to the steering wheel to support the curve of your back. The seat should be close enough to allow your knees to bend and your feet to reach the pedals.
Correct lifting position
If you must lift objects, do not try to lift objects that are awkward or are heavier than 30 pounds.
Before you lift a heavy object, make sure you have firm footing.
To pick up an object that is lower than the level of your waist, keep your back straight and bend at your knees and hips. Do not bend forward at the waist with your knees straight
Stand with a wide stance close to the object you are trying to pick up and keep your feet firm on the ground. Tighten your stomach muscles and lift the object using your leg muscles. Straighten your knees in a steady motion. Don't jerk the object up to your body.
Stand completely upright without twisting. Always move your feet forward when lifting an object.
If you are lifting an object from a table, slide it to the edge to the table so that you can hold it close to your body. Bend your knees so that you are close to the object. Use your legs to lift the object and come to a standing position.
Avoid lifting heavy objects above waist level.
Hold packages close to your body with your arms bent. Keep your stomach muscles tight. Take small steps and go slowly.
To lower the object, place your feet as you did to lift, tighten stomach muscles and bend your hips and knees.
What is the best position for sleeping and lying down?
No matter what position you lie in, the pillow should be under your head, but not your shoulders, and should be a thickness that allows your head to be in a normal position.
Try to sleep in a position that helps you maintain the curve in your back (such as on your back with a pillow under your knees or a lumbar roll under your lower back, or on your side with your knees slightly bent). Do not sleep on your side with your knees drawn up to your chest. You may want to avoid sleeping on your stomach, especially on a saggy mattress, since this can cause back strain and can be uncomfortable for your neck.
Select a firm mattress and box spring set that does not sag. If necessary, place a board under your mattress. You can also place the mattress on the floor temporarily if necessary. If you've always slept on a soft surface, it may be more painful to change to a hard surface. Take the time to find the right mattress and box spring for your needs.
Try using a back support (lumbar support) at night to make you more comfortable. A rolled sheet or towel tied around your waist may be helpful.
When standing up from the lying position, turn on your side, draw up both knees and swing your legs on the side of the bed. Sit up by pushing yourself up with your hands. Avoid bending forward at your waist.
These recommendations will benefit most people who have back pain. If any of these guidelines causes an increase of pain or the spreading of pain to the legs, stop the activity and seek the advice of a physician, chiropractor or physical therapist.
Share

**7.** <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/strength-and-flexibility-exercises/common-posture-mistakes-and-fixes/>

Common posture mistakes and fixes
Exercises and tips to help alleviate muscle tension caused by poor sitting and standing habits.
Physiotherapist Nick Sinfield describes 8 common posture mistakes and how to correct them with strength and stretching exercises.
If you have back pain, improving your posture is unlikely to address the root cause of your pain, but it may help alleviate muscle tension.
"Correcting your posture may feel awkward at first because your body has become so used to sitting and standing in a particular way," says Sinfield.
"But with a bit of practise, good posture will become second nature and be 1 step to helping your back in the long term."
Slouching in a chair
Slouching doesn't always cause discomfort, but over time this position can place strain on already sensitised muscles and soft tissues.
This strain may increase tension in the muscles, which may in turn cause pain.
Get into the habit of sitting correctly. It may not feel comfortable initially because your muscles have not been conditioned to support you in the correct position.
Exercises to strengthen your core and buttock muscles, and back extensions, will help correct a slouching posture.
Sticking your bottom out
If your bottom tends to stick out or you have a pronounced curve in your lower back, you may have hyperlordosis. This is an exaggerated inward curve of the lower back that creates a "Donald Duck" posture.
Core and buttock strengthening exercises, hip flexor and thigh stretches, and making a conscious effort to correct your standing posture are recommended to help correct a sticking out bottom.
Wearing high heels, excessive weight around the stomach and pregnancy can all contribue to a "Donald Duck" posture.
To help correct your standing posture, imagine a string attached to the top of your head pulling you upwards.
The idea is to keep your body in perfect alignment, maintaining the spine's natural curvature, with your neck straight and shoulders parallel with the hips:
keep your shoulders back and relaxed
pull in your abdomen
keep your feet about hip distance apart
balance your weight evenly on both feet
try not to tilt your head forward, backwards or sideways
keep your legs straight, but knees relaxed
Watch a video on improving your posture.
Video: NHS Strength and flexibility - posture
In this video, Laura from the NHS Couch to 5K programme, shows you how to have the correct posture.
Media last reviewed: 3 April 2022
Media review due: 3 April 2025
See exercise video safety information
The exercises in this video are suitable for most people. They are general exercises only and are not aimed at treating any specific cause of pain or condition.
Get advice from a GP or health professional before trying it, especially if:
you have any concerns about your health
you are not sure if the exercises are suitable
you have any pre-existing health problems or injuries, or any current symptoms
Stop the exercise immediately and get medical help if you feel any pain or feel unwell.
Standing with a flat back
A flat back means your pelvis is tucked in and your lower back is straight instead of naturally curved, causing you to stoop forward. People with a flat back often find it difficult standing for long periods.
This posture is often caused by muscle imbalances, which encourage you to adopt such a position. Spending long periods sitting down can also contribute to a flat back.
A flat back also tends to make you lean your neck and head forwards, which can cause neck and upper back strain.
Exercises to strengthen your core, buttocks, neck and rear shoulder muscles, and back extensions, are recommended to help correct a flat back.
Leaning on 1 leg
Leaning more on 1 leg while standing can feel comfortable, especially if you have been standing for a while. But instead of using your buttocks and core muscles to keep you upright, you place excessive pressure on 1 side of your lower back and hip.
Over time, you may develop muscle imbalances around the pelvis area, which can cause muscular strain in the lower back and buttocks.
Other causes of uneven hips include carrying heavy backpacks on 1 shoulder, and parents carrying toddlers on 1 hip.
To improve this posture, try to get into the habit of standing with your weight evenly distributed on both legs.
Hunched back and 'text neck'
Hunching over your keyboard is usually a sign that you have a tight chest and a weak upper back. Over time, this type of posture can contribute to you developing a rounded upper back, which can cause shoulder and upper back stiffness.
When hunching over a computer, your head may tend to lean forward, which can lead to poor posture. Using a mobile can cause similar problems dubbed "text neck".
Upper back, neck and rear shoulder strengthening exercises, chest stretches and neck posture drills are recommended to help correct a hunched back.
Poking your chin
The poking chin posture can be caused by sitting too low, a screen set too high, a hunched back, or a combination of all 3.
Correcting a poking chin involves improving your sitting habits and exercises to correct your posture.
How to correct a poking chin:
gently lengthen your neck upwards as you tuck in your chin
bring your shoulder blades down and back towards your spine
pull in your lower tummy muscles to maintain a natural curve in your lower back
adjust your seating
Rounded shoulders
A way to tell if you have rounded shoulders is to stand in front of a mirror and let your arms hang naturally by your sides. If your knuckles face forward, it may indicate that you have a tight chest and a weak upper back, giving the appearance of rounded shoulders.
Rounded shoulders are typically caused by poor posture habits, muscle imbalances and focusing too much on certain exercises, such as too much focus on chest strength while neglecting the upper back.
Cradling your phone
Holding your phone handset between your ear and shoulder places strain on the muscles of the neck, upper back and shoulders. The neck and shoulders are not designed to hold this position for any length of time.
Over time, this posture can place strain on the muscles and other soft tissues, and lead to muscle imbalances between the left and right side of your neck.
Try to get into the habit of holding the phone with your hand, or use a hands-free device.
Exercises for neck stiffness and pain:
neck stretches – gently lower your left ear towards your left shoulder; hold for 10 to 15 deep breaths, then repeat on opposite side
neck rotations – slowly turn your chin towards 1 shoulder; hold for 10 to 15 deep breaths, then repeat on opposite side

**8.** <https://www.health.harvard.edu/pain/4-ways-to-turn-good-posture-into-less-back-pain>

4 ways to turn good posture into less back pain
April 18, 2020
Most of us get back pain at some point in our lives. It may be due to a sports-related injury, an accident, or a congenital condition such as scoliosis. But most of the time, upper or lower back pain develops during the course of day-to-day life. Repetitive activities at work or home, such as sitting at a computer or lifting and carrying, may produce tension and muscle tightness that result in a backache. One solution to preventing back pain is to improve posture.
In addition to improving your posture, general physical fitness and a healthy weight are important are important, too. But the surprisingly simple act of paying attention to improving your posture can go a long way.
The basics of posture
Posture is the way you hold your body while standing, sitting, or performing tasks like lifting, bending, pulling, or reaching. If your posture is good, the bones of the spine — the vertebrae — are correctly aligned.
4 steps toward improving your posture
You can improve your posture — and head off back pain — by practicing some imagery and a few easy exercises.
Imagery. Think of a straight line passing through your body from ceiling to floor (your ears, shoulders, hips, knees, and ankles should be even and line up vertically). Now imagine that a strong cord attached to the top of your head is pulling you upward, making you taller. Try to hold your pelvis level — don't allow the lower back to sway — and resist the urge to stand on tiptoe. Instead, think of stretching your head toward the ceiling, increasing the space between your rib cage and pelvis. Picture yourself as a ballerina or ice skater rather than a soldier at attention.
Shoulder blade squeeze. Sit up straight in a chair with your hands resting on your thighs. Keep your shoulders down and your chin level. Slowly draw your shoulders back and squeeze your shoulder blades together. Hold for a count of five; relax. Repeat three or four times.
Upper-body stretch. Stand facing a corner with your arms raised, hands flat against the walls, elbows at shoulder height. Place one foot ahead of the other. Bending your forward knee, exhale as you lean your body toward the corner. Keep your back straight and your chest and head up. You should feel a nice stretch across your chest. Hold this position for 20-30 seconds. Relax.
Arm-across-chest stretch. Raise your right arm to shoulder level in front of you and bend the arm at the elbow, keeping the forearm parallel to the floor. Grasp the right elbow with your left hand and gently pull it across your chest so that you feel a stretch in the upper arm and shoulder on the right side. Hold for 20 seconds; relax both arms. Repeat to the other side. Repeat three times on each side.
Practice these imagery and posture exercises throughout the day. You might try to find a good trigger to help you remember, such as doing one or more of them when you get up from your desk, or right before scheduled breaks and lunch. Soon it will become a habit.
For more on healing an aching back, review Back Pain , a Special Health Report from Harvard Medical School.
Image: Andreypopov/Getty Images

**9.** <https://www.physio-pedia.com/Posture>

Posture
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Contents
Good posture is about more than standing up straight so you can look your best.
It is an important part of your long-term health.
Making sure that you hold your body the right way, whether you are moving or still, can prevent pain, injuries, and other health problems.
What is posture?
Posture, which is the relative disposition of the body at any one moment, is a composite of the positions of the different joints of the body at that time. The position of each joint has an effect on the position of the other joints:
Correct posture- the position in which minimum stress is applied to each joint
Faulty posture- any static position that increases the stress to the joints [1]
Generally, there are two types of posture:
Static posture- the body and its segments are aligned and maintained in certain positions. Examples include standing, sitting, lying, and kneeling.
Dynamic posture- the body or its segments are moving—walking, running, jumping, throwing, and lifting. [2]
Posture Assessment[ edit | edit source ]
Optimal posture
The key to good posture is the position of the spine. The spine has three natural curves - at your neck, mid/upper back, and lower back. Correct posture should maintain these curves, but not increase them. Your head should be above your shoulders, and the top of your shoulder should be over the hips.
In an ideal posture, the line of gravity should pass through specific points of the body. This can simply be observed or evaluated using a plumb line to assess the midline of the body.
This line should pass through the lobe of the ear, the shoulder joint, the hip joint, though the greater trochanter of the femur, then slightly anterior to the midline of the knee joint and lastly anterior to the lateral malleolus.
When viewed from either the front or the back, the vertical line passing through the body's centre of gravity should theoretically bisect the body into two equal halves, with the bodyweight distributed evenly between the two feet.
While assessing posture, symmetry and rotations/tilts should be observed in the anterior, lateral and posterior views. Assess:
Head alignment
Education, teach client to:
Be mindful of posture during everyday activities, like watching television, washing dishes, or walking
Stay active. Any kind of exercise may help improve your posture, but certain types of exercises can be especially helpful. eg. yoga, tai chi, and other classes that focuses on body awareness. It is also a good idea to do exercises that strengthen your core .
Maintain a healthy weight. Extra weight can weaken abdominal muscles , cause problems for pelvis and spine, and contribute to low back pain.
Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes. High heels, for example, can throw off balance and force person to walk differently. This puts more stress on muscles and harms posture.
Make sure work surfaces are at a comfortable height for you, whether sitting in front of a computer, making dinner, or eating a meal [8] .
Ensure to engage your core (example deep abdominal and pelvic floor muscles ) during strenuous activities and breath out as you lift. This helps to stabilise your spine . [9]
Remember to maintain a neutral posture as this helps body to function optimally.
And to avoid:
Static postures such as prolonged sitting and standing.
Prolonged cross-legged sitting can lead to a bent and asymmetrical posture, especially for people with low back pain [10] . Erect sitting for long hours can also cause postural problems. It is recommended to get up from your chair and move around at least every 30 minutes. [11] .
Prolonged standing, usually at work, can lead to musculoskeletal pain and vascular disorders. Seated breaks are necessary to prevent the risk of causing associated pain or discomfort [12] .
Smoking. Smoking habits were suggested to have a long-term-effect on the posture control system as it increases risk for lumbar disc degeneration [13] .
Objectives for Physiotherapy:
Obtain functional Joint Range of Motion. This is necessary to achieve optimal static and dynamic posture alignment.
Obtain normal Muscle Length. Maintaining proper muscle length can reduce the risk of postural deviations.
Obtain Good Muscle Strength . Sufficient muscle strength is needed to pull the body into the correct posture.
Obtain Excellent Muscle Endurance. Postural muscles need to be able to work for hours on end. Poor endurance is a major factor in habitual poor posture.
Normal Nerve Extensibility . Neural tissue needs enough length to allow for normal posture.
Good Spatial Awareness i.e where you are in space. Verbal and visual feedback as well as postural taping can assist in reinforcing proper body orientation.
Perfect Posture Habits. The hardest part is the initial change, then reinforcing the correct habit. [14]
Muscle Action in Posture[ edit | edit source ]
The balanced posture of the body reduces the work done by the muscles in maintaining it in an erect posture. It has been determined (using electromyography) that, in general [15] :
The intrinsic muscles of the feet are quiescent, because of the support provided by the ligaments.
Soleus is constantly active because gravity tends to pull the body forward over the feet. Gastrocnemius and the deep posterior tibial muscles are less frequently active.
Tibialis anterior is less active (unless high heels are being worn).
Quadriceps and the Hamstrings are generally not as active [16] .
Iliopsoas is constantly active.
Examples of Types of Standing Posture[ edit | edit source ]
Some of the examples of faulty posture can be as follows:
Lordotic posture - Lordosis refers to the normal inward curvature of the spine. When this curve is exaggerated it is usually referred to as hyperlordosis. The pelvis is usually tilted anteriorly.
Sway Back Posture - In this type of posture, there is forward head, hyper-extension of the cervical spine, flexion of the thoracic spine, lumbar spine extension, posterior tilt of the pelvis, hip and knee hyper-extension and ankle slightly plantarflexed.
Flat back posture- In this type of posture, there is forward head, extension of the cervical spine, extension of the thoracic spine, loss of lumbar lordosis and posterior pelvic tilt.
Forward head posture - Describes the shift of the head forward with the chin poking out. It is caused by increased flexion of the lower cervical spine and upper thoracic spine with increased extension of the upper cervical spine and extension of the occiput on C1.
Scoliosis - A deviation of the normal vertical line of the spine, consisting of a lateral curvature and rotation of the vertebrae. Scoliosis is considered when there is at least 10° of spinal angulation on the posterior-anterior radiograph associated with vertebral rotation [17] . This is a 3 dimensional C or S shaped sideways curve of the spine.
Kyphosis - An increased convex curve observed in the thoracic or sacral regions of the spine.

**10.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RqcOCBb4arc>

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**back pain**

**1.** <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/back-pain/symptoms-causes/syc-20369906>

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Symptoms
Back pain can range from a muscle aching to a shooting, burning or stabbing sensation. Also, the pain can radiate down a leg. Bending, twisting, lifting, standing or walking can make it worse.
When to see a doctor
Most back pain gradually improves with home treatment and self-care, usually within a few weeks. Contact your health care provider for back pain that:
Lasts longer than a few weeks
Is severe and doesn't improve with rest
Spreads down one or both legs, especially if the pain goes below the knee
Causes weakness, numbness or tingling in one or both legs
Is paired with unexplained weight loss
In rare cases, back pain can signal a serious medical problem. Seek immediate care for back pain that:
Causes new bowel or bladder problems
Is accompanied by a fever
Follows a fall, blow to the back or other injury
Click here for an infographic to learn more
Back pain often develops without a cause that shows up in a test or imaging study. Conditions commonly linked to back pain include:
Muscle or ligament strain. Repeated heavy lifting or a sudden awkward movement can strain back muscles and spinal ligaments. For people in poor physical condition, constant strain on the back can cause painful muscle spasms.
Bulging or ruptured disks. Disks act as cushions between the bones in the spine. The soft material inside a disk can bulge or rupture and press on a nerve. However, a bulging or ruptured disk might not cause back pain. Disk disease is often found on spine X-rays, CT scans or MRIs done for another reason.
Arthritis. Osteoarthritis can affect the lower back. In some cases, arthritis in the spine can lead to a narrowing of the space around the spinal cord, a condition called spinal stenosis.
Osteoporosis. The spine's vertebrae can develop painful breaks if the bones become porous and brittle.
More Information
Infographic: Back Pain
Risk factors
Anyone can develop back pain, even children and teens. These factors can increase the risk of developing back pain:
Age. Back pain is more common with age, starting around age 30 or 40.
Lack of exercise. Weak, unused muscles in the back and abdomen might lead to back pain.
Excess weight. Excess body weight puts extra stress on the back.
Diseases. Some types of arthritis and cancer can contribute to back pain.
Improper lifting. Using the back instead of the legs can lead to back pain.
Psychological conditions. People prone to depression and anxiety appear to have a greater risk of back pain. Stress can cause muscle tension, which can contribute to back pain.
Smoking. Smokers have increased rates of back pain. This may occur because smoking causes coughing, which can lead to herniated disks. Smoking can also decrease blood flow to the spine and increase the risk of osteoporosis.
Prevention
Improving one's physical condition and learning and practicing how to use the body might help prevent back pain.
To keep the back healthy and strong:
Exercise. Regular low-impact aerobic activities — those that don't strain or jolt the back — can increase strength and endurance in the back and allow the muscles to work better. Walking, bicycling and swimming are good choices. Talk with your health care provider about which activities to try.
Build muscle strength and flexibility. Abdominal and back muscle exercises, which strengthen the core, help condition these muscles so that they work together to support the back.
Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight strains back muscles.
Quit smoking. Smoking increases the risk of low back pain. The risk increases with the number of cigarettes smoked per day, so quitting should help reduce this risk.
Avoid movements that twist or strain the back. To use the body properly:
Stand smart. Don't slouch. Maintain a neutral pelvic position. When standing for long periods, place one foot on a low footstool to take some of the load off the lower back. Alternate feet. Good posture can reduce the stress on back muscles.
Sit smart. Choose a seat with good lower back support, armrests and a swivel base. Placing a pillow or rolled towel in the small of the back can maintain its normal curve. Keep knees and hips level. Change position frequently, at least every half-hour.
Lift smart. Avoid heavy lifting, if possible. If you must lift something heavy, let your legs do the work. Keep your back straight — no twisting — and bend only at the knees. Hold the load close to your body. Find a lifting partner if the object is heavy or awkward.
Buyer beware
Because back pain is common, many products promise prevention or relief. But there's no good evidence that special shoes, shoe inserts, back supports or specially designed furniture can help.
In addition, there doesn't appear to be one type of mattress that's best for people with back pain. It's probably a matter of what feels most comfortable.
The Mayo Clinic experience and patient stories
Our patients tell us that the quality of their interactions, our attention to detail and the efficiency of their visits mean health care like they've never experienced. See the stories of satisfied Mayo Clinic patients.

**2.** <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/back-pain>

Related information on Australian websites
What is back pain?
Back pain refers to pain that you may feel in your back or spine. It is a very common problem: 1 in 6 Australians report having back problems, and 4 out of 5 experience it sometime in their life. While both men and women report that they experience back problems, it is more commonly reported by people 25 years and older.
Back pain can be grouped into different categories. Lower back pain refers to pain felt in the lower part of the spine (the lumbar spine). Back problems can also affect the upper back (the thoracic spine), the neck (cervical spine) as well as the tailbone (coccyx).
People experience back pain in different ways. Some people say it feels like a sharp pain; other people report aches or spasms. You may feel stiff, or find it hard to turn or bend in certain directions. In some cases, such as sciatica , pain can travel down one or both your legs.
Back pain can impact you physically and mentally. People suffering from back pain may feel irritable or short-tempered. They may worry about whether the pain will control their life and may experience feelings of helplessness.
What causes back pain?
Your spine or backbone is a complex structure that is made up of 24 small bones called vertebrae that are stacked on top of each other. Discs sit between each vertebra to act as cushions or shock absorbers and give your spine flexibility. Vertebrae are joined together by small joints called ‘facet’ joints. These joints allow you to move and bend your back. A mesh of ligaments and muscles hold the spine together and provide structural support, which allows you to move.
Back pain can originate from any of these structures, but in most cases, this pain doesn’t result from any significant damage to your spine. This pain usually stems from surrounding muscles, ligaments or joints and occasionally spinal disc problems .
For at least 9 in 10 people, back pain is not caused by any particular condition and is referred to as non-specific back pain.
This type of back pain results from a range of different factors such as:
poor posture
an unhealthy weight
Less than 1 in 100 people have back pain that is related to a serious medical problem such as cancer , infection , a spinal fracture or specific conditions such as ankylosing spondylitis . Research has also shown that you actually don’t need to know the cause of back pain to treat it successfully.
CHECK YOUR SYMPTOMS — Use the Symptom Checker and find out if you need to seek medical help.
When should I see my doctor?
If you have back pain and have lost feeling or movement in your limbs or are having problems controlling your bowels or bladder, call triple 000 immediately and ask for an ambulance.
You should see your doctor or other health care professional for further advice if:
your pain bothers you
your back pain doesn’t improve after a few weeks or worsens
you have symptoms such as weight loss, tingling or numbness in the legs, or problems with bladder and/or bowel control
you have osteoporosis
You should see your doctor as soon as possible, if you have a history of cancer, are prone to infection, or use intravenous drugs.
For most people, back pain will resolve in a few weeks with appropriate self-care. After 2 months, 9 out of 10 people will recover from back pain.
How is back pain diagnosed?
Your health professional will first assess your back pain. They may ask questions including:
When did your back pain begin?
What activities were you doing differently to normal before your back pain started?
How would you describe the pain? Is there tingling or numbness?
What makes the pain better or worse?
If your pain doesn’t settle after a few weeks or starts getting worse, ask your doctor or other health care professional about other management options. You may be referred for tests if there is reason to suspect a more serious cause for your back pain.
In most situations, imaging such as X-ray , CT or MRI scans are not helpful unless there is an obvious injury or strain.
Unnecessary tests can be expensive, and many investigations will show changes in your spine that reflect the normal passage of time, rather than damage to your spine.
How is back pain treated?
You can do several things to manage back pain. A conversation with your doctor or physiotherapist can help address any concerns you may have and help you to better understand your treatment. Remember that not all information is trustworthy, so let your healthcare team know about treatments you are considering before you begin them.
Ways to manage back pain include the following:
Keeping active — Try to return to some physical activity or regular work as soon as you can. Your back is designed to move, so don’t rest your back for more than a day or two.
Physiotherapy — A qualified physiotherapist or exercise physiologist can suggest exercises to keep your back moving.
Targeted training or exercise programs — Any exercise you enjoy can help manage back pain. Examples include Pilates, McKenzie therapy, the Alexander technique, sling exercise, graded activity exercise or motor control exercise.
Acupuncture — Some studies show acupuncture can relieve back pain, but it is not clear how effective it is in the long term.
Treatment by chiropractors or osteopaths — These health practitioners are often seen by patients for the relief of back pain
Medication — Common pain relief medication such as paracetamol is not usually effective for back pain. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) can provide a small reduction in back pain, but side effects may be a concern. If you take medication to manage back pain, use the lowest effective dose for the shortest time possible. For some people topical NSAIDs (such as a gel formulation) may be a safer option than NSAIDs in tablets.
Strong pain medication is not recommended for back pain. Research shows strong pain medication provides little benefit and can cause side effects such as drowsiness, sedation and/or dependence.
If you have severe back pain and your current medication is not adequately managing it, talk to your doctor about a suitable treatment plan. In some cases, your doctor may suggest an injection that can numb the pain such as an epidural injection, or a surgical procedure, such as a laminectomy to help manage your pain.
There are many other treatments to manage back pain, but they have not been well proven. These include:
herbal medicines (such as cayenne, devil’s claw, white willow bark and comfrey)
laser therapy
heat and cold therapy (such as ice packs, hot water bottles)
electrotherapy (such as transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation or TENS)
How can back pain be prevented?
In most cases, you can prevent back pain by making changes to your lifestyle.
Doing exercise helps to keep your back flexible and strong. Exercise improves your posture and helps your muscles to support your spine. Exercises that can help prevent back pain include:
low-impact aerobic exercise (such as walking, tai chi or swimming)
strengthening exercises, such as lifting weights, climbing stairs or hiking hills
stretching exercises, such as Pilates and yoga
Maintaining a good posture is important when you sit at home, in your workplace, or in your car. Try not to slouch, and use equipment that supports your back, such as a lumbar support or footstool if you need.
Keeping a healthy weight is also important. Excess fat can strain your back and lead to back pain, sciatica and inflammation.
Practise safe lifting in your home or workplace. Whenever you pick up a heavy load, squat down, hold the object close to your body, and lift with your legs.
In addition:
Quit smoking — Smoking increases your chances of developing persistent back pain.
Relax — Learning relaxation techniques and mindfulness can help to reduce stress and muscle tension in your back.
Avoid high heels — wearing high heels can place strain on your back.
Can back pain lead to complications?
The good news is that most people recover from back pain within a few weeks.1 See your doctor if you experience additional symptoms, such as:
loss of bowel and/or bladder control
severe pain that gets worse instead of better over time
problems with passing urine or bowel movements
numbness or a ’pins-and-needles’ sensation in your legs, back or elsewhere
unexplained weight loss
back redness or swelling
For some people, back pain becomes an ongoing problem. Around 1 in every 2 people who experience back pain will experience it again, and for 1 in 5 people, back pain may last beyond 8 to 12 weeks. Possible complications that result from persistent, long-term back pain include:
dependence on strong pain medicines, such as opioids
reduced quality of life
more difficulty finding work and keeping active
See your healthcare professional if your back pain is unresolved and limits your movement and activities. A health care professional can help you find ways to manage your pain and regain a better quality of life.
Resources and support
For more information and support, visit the Pain Australia website and find a support group or online community for people living with chronic pain.
Other languages
Do you prefer reading in languages other than English? The following websites offer translated information about back pain:
The Hunter Integrated Pain Service (HIPS) has videos on understanding pain in several languages including Japanese, French, Portuguese and Norwegian.
Multicultural Health Communication Service NSW has fact sheets on low back pain in Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Korean and Vietnamese.
Apps and tools

**3.** <https://www.versusarthritis.org/about-arthritis/conditions/back-pain/>

Versus Arthritis
Get help
What should I know about back pain?
Back pain is a very common problem and will affect many of us at some point during our lives.
The good news is that in most cases it isn’t a serious problem, and it might just be caused by a simple strain to a muscle or ligament.
As far as possible, it’s best to continue with your normal everyday activities as soon as you can and to keep moving.
Being active and exercising won’t make your back pain worse, even if you have a bit of pain and discomfort at first. Staying active will help you get better. Taking painkillers can help you do this.
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How your back works
The spine, which is also called the backbone or spinal column, is one of the strongest parts of the body and gives us a great deal of flexibility and strength.
It’s made up of 24 bones, known as vertebrae, one sitting on top of the other. These bones have discs in between and lots of strong ligaments and muscles around them for support. There are also the bones in the tailbone at the bottom of the back, which are fused together and have no discs in between.
On either side of the spine, running from top to bottom, are many small joints called the facet joints.
The spinal cord passes inside the vertebrae, which protect it.
The spinal cord connects to the brain through the base of the skull and to the rest of the body by nerves that pass through spaces between the bones of the spine. These nerves are also known as nerve roots.
As you grow older, the structures of your spine, such as the joints, discs and ligaments, age as well. The structures remain strong but it’s usual for your back to get stiffer as you get older.
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Causes
Often back pain doesn’t have one simple cause but may be due to one or more of the following:
poor posture
lack of exercise resulting in stiffening of the spine and weak muscles
muscle strains or sprains.
As well as the things listed above, there are also specific conditions which are linked with pain felt in the back. It’s important to remember that severe pain doesn’t necessarily mean there’s a serious problem. Some common conditions are listed below.
Spondylosis
As we grow older, the bones, discs and ligaments in the spine can naturally weaken as they age. This happens to all of us to some degree as part of the ageing process, but it doesn’t have to be a problem and not everyone will have pain from this.
As we grow older the discs in the spine become thinner and the spaces between the vertebrae become narrower. Little pieces of bone, known as osteophytes, may form at the edges of the vertebrae and facet joints.
The medical term for this is spondylosis and is very similar to the changes caused by osteoarthritis in other joints.
Keeping the spine supple and the muscles around the spine and pelvis strong, will reduce the impact of spondylosis.
Sciatica
Back pain is sometimes linked with pain in the legs, and there may be numbness or a tingling feeling. This is called sciatica.
This is due to a nerve in the spine being pressed on or squeezed. For most people with sciatica, the leg pain can be the worst part and occasionally they may have little or no back pain at all.
In most cases sciatica is caused by a bulging disc pressing on the nerve. Discs are designed to bulge so we can move our spines about easily, but sometimes a bulge can ‘catch’ a nerve root and cause pain that travels all the way down the leg and foot.
Most people recover fairly quickly, although in some cases it might take a number of months.
Starting gentle exercise as soon as you can will greatly help with sciatica. It is also a very good idea to see a physiotherapist .
Spinal stenosis
Sometimes back pain is linked with pain in the legs which starts after you start walking for a few minutes, and then tends to get better very quickly when you sit down. This is known as spinal stenosis.
This can happen from birth or can develop as we get older.
Problems are caused when something presses on the small space in the middle of the spine, where the nerves are. This space, which is called the spinal canal or nerve root canal, can be squeezed by bone or ligament.
Symptoms often affect both legs, but one may be worse than the other. The pain usually gets better when you sit down and rest, and some people find they have less pain if they walk a little stooped. Like sciatica, the main problem tends to be leg pain more than the back pain.
In most cases, neither sciatica nor spinal stenosis are serious problems. However, if the symptoms cause you a lot of trouble and greatly affect your quality of life then you should see your doctor for further advice and to discuss what else can be done.
Other causes
Other rarer causes of back pain include:
bone problems such as a fracture – often linked to thinning of the bones, which is known as osteoporosis
an infection
inflammation, for example in the condition ankylosing spondylitis .
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When to see a doctor
Even though it's common, most cases of back pain tend to clear up without the need to see a doctor.
You should see your doctor if your pain:
is really bad
lasts for a long time
stops you from working or doing the things you enjoy
affects your everyday activities
gets worse.
You should also see your doctor if you have any changes in sexual function, for example, being unable to get an erection.
If the pain is causing you significant problems and stops you from getting on with normal life and work activities, your doctor will examine you and ask you questions.
These questions will help predict how likely it is that you need further help with your back pain. If you do need further support, your doctor will make a referral to physiotherapy so that you can have treatment early, to help with the pain and return to normal activities.
It’s natural to want to know what has caused your back pain. However, specialists may not be able to tell you for certain what has caused your back pain, even after carefully assessing you.
If you’re concerned about the cause of your back pain, it can help to talk openly about any worries with a healthcare professional, as reducing any fear may help speed up your recovery.
What are the warning signs of a serious problem?
Very rarely back pain or pain that travels down the leg is a sign of a serious problem.
If you have any of the following symptoms, you should seek urgent medical attention:
difficulty controlling or passing urine
loss of control of your bowels
numbness around your back passage or your genitals
serious weakness in your legs so you find standing really difficult
severe and ongoing back pain that gets worse over several weeks.
The above symptoms could potentially be linked to a rare but serious condition that needs urgent medical attention.
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Diagnosis
National guidelines suggest that doctors should use a common-sense ‘wait and see’ approach when diagnosing back pain before deciding if you need further treatment, especially as most cases of back pain improve by themselves. As a patient this approach can sometimes be frustrating, but you may find that if you keep up your self-help measures, you won’t need further treatment anyway.
Should you need further treatment, your GP will be able to assess your back pain by discussing your symptoms with you. Most problems can be diagnosed after a simple examination, and it’s unlikely that any special tests will be needed.
Tests
You may be sent for tests if:
you’ve had an injury to your back, for example a bad fall
your doctor suspects that there may be an underlying cause for your pain
the pain has lasted for an unusually long time.
In this case a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan or computerised tomography (CT) scan may be needed.
X-rays are much less commonly used because back pain is often caused by problems with soft tissues, such as ligaments and muscles, which can’t be seen on x-rays.
Changes to the spine as a result of spondylosis can show up on x-rays. These common changes that happen to us all can appear on x-rays without people having any pain or problems. Because of this, x-rays aren’t particularly helpful.
Remember that sometimes even after a thorough investigation it might not be possible to say for certain what is causing back pain.
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Managing your symptoms
The most important things to do to treat back pain is to keep moving, continue with everyday activities and have a healthy lifestyle.
Some people worry that if they have back pain, doing certain activities such as lifting things, twisting and turning might make their back pain worse. It’s important to remember that our backs and our spines are very strong and are designed to move.
In fact, too much rest can make back pain worse.
Being active and continuing with your everyday activities as soon as possible, and as much as possible, will speed up your recovery.
There’s also evidence to suggest that how you respond emotionally to having back pain has an important impact on how quickly you get better. The more positive you are, the more active you are, the quicker your back will get better.
Remember, if you’re ever struggling don’t suffer in silence, talk to a healthcare professional.
Keep moving
Staying active is the most important way you can help yourself if you have back pain.
Keeping the muscles around the spine strong, will provide more support to the bones and joints and take pressure off them. The more you move, the more the back will keep its natural range of movement.
If you stop being active for a long time, the muscles in your back become weak and you become less fit, and this can make your back pain worse. Not moving can make your back more stiff and painful.
Regular exercise leads to shorter and less frequent episodes of back pain. It also releases chemicals called endorphins, which are the body’s natural painkillers. These improve pain and make you feel happier.
Exercise might make your back feel a bit sore at first but it doesn’t cause any harm – so don’t let it put you off. If you're getting back to exercise, start off gently and gradually increase the amount of exercise you do. Regular and small episodes of exercise is a good way to start and then each day try to do a little bit more.
Try taking some painkillers beforehand too. Over time, your back will get stronger and more flexible, and this should reduce pain.
Types of exercise for back pain
It’s better to choose a form of exercise that you enjoy as you’re more likely to stick to it. There are many forms of exercise that have helped people with back pain. Examples include:
swimming
Pilates
going to the gym.
Research has found that a specially developed 12-week yoga programme can help people with low back pain lead more active lives and manage their condition more effectively. Many of the people who took part in the study also found that they had the knowledge to prevent further attacks if they felt an episode of back pain coming on.
You can find more information about the 12-week programme at www.yogaforbacks.co.uk
Many community and sports centres also run yoga classes if you’re interested in trying it. Make sure you speak to the yoga instructor before you start so they’re aware that you have back pain.
You can find some examples of exercises you might like to try to reduce your pain on our exercises for the back page .
Pain during exercise
You may feel some discomfort and sometimes pain when you exercise. This feeling is normal and should calm down a few minutes after you finish. It’s not a sign that you're hurting yourself. Exercise will help reduce pain and can help you manage your back pain better.
While you can push yourself and do strenuous exercise, it’s important not to overdo it. If you are in pain that you can’t cope with during or after your activity, you will need to see a doctor. The key is to start off gently and to gradually increase the amount you do.
Often people stop exercising once their back pain has cleared up. But if you stop exercising all the improvements you’ve made will disappear within a few weeks. So, it’s important that you continue to exercise regularly and don’t stop when the pain is gone and you’re feeling better.
If you’re ever having any trouble exercising, it can be a good idea to see a GP or ask for a referral to a physiotherapist for tailored exercise advice. If you're a member of a gym, there may well be personal trainers there who can give you expert advice. Make sure you tell them about your condition.
Painkillers
Simple painkillers such as paracetamol may help to reduce symptoms and allow you to continue with your everyday activities. You should use them as and when you need them but it’s best to take them before the pain becomes very bad. It’s important that you take them regularly and at the recommended dose, especially when you’re having a flare-up of your back pain.
Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen, which you can buy at chemists and supermarkets, can also help.
You can use painkillers and NSAIDs for a short course of treatment of about a week to 10 days. If they’ve not helped after this time, then they’re unlikely to. However, if they do help but the pain returns when you stop taking them, you could try another short course.
There are also anti-inflammatory creams or gels that can be rubbed onto affected areas. Be careful not to exceed the dose by taking an NSAID tablet and applying an NSAID cream at the same time.
If you have any questions or concerns about what drugs you can take and the dosage, talk to a doctor or a pharmacist.
Sometimes other drugs are used to treat back pain if you’re really struggling with the pain. Read our treatments section for more information.
Heat/ice packs
Applying a heat pack to the affected area can ease pain and stiffness. You can use a reusable heat pad which you can buy from chemists and sports shops, a microwavable wheat bag or a hot-water bottle.
A warm bath or hot shower can have a similar soothing effect.
An ice pack bought from a chemist, or even just a bag of frozen peas, can also be helpful.
You may find that alternating between heat and ice therapy throughout a day or week can help.
You could experiment with hot and cold packs to find what works best for you.
Make sure you protect your skin from direct contact with heat or ice packs to avoid burns or irritation of your skin. A tea towel over the heat or ice pack is one way to do that. Read the instructions carefully if you have bought a heat or ice therapy product. Applying ice or heat for about 15 to 20 minutes at a time is normally enough.
Posture
Try to maintain good posture when sitting at home, at work or in the car. Staying in awkward positions while working or driving, for example, will affect the soft tissues in your back that support your spine, and will increase your pain or your recovery time.
Try to change your posture often, because remaining in the same position for too long can be bad for you.
Complementary medicine
There are many different complementary treatments that are believed to help with pain relief, and some people do feel better when they use them.
However, on the whole these treatments aren’t recommended for use on the NHS because there’s no proof that they definitely work.
Acupuncture
Sometimes acupuncture might provide pain relief. It’s thought to work by diverting or changing the painful sensations that are sent to the brain from painful tissues and by stimulating the body’s own pain-relieving hormones, known as endorphins.
Massage
Massage is a manual technique which uses rhythmic strokes, kneading or tapping actions to move the muscles and soft tissue of the body. Massage can reduce anxiety and stress levels, ease muscular tension and fatigue, and improve circulation, which all work to reduce pain levels.
Lifting correctly
Learning to lift correctly may help to prevent further episodes of back pain.
Bend your knees when lifting and allow your spine to move as necessary, without twisting it. When doing tasks like carrying shopping, try and split the load between both hands. Keeping the weight close to your body also helps.
Diet and nutrition
There are no special diets that have been shown to either help or prevent back pain.
However, if you’re overweight you should consider changing your diet and doing some regular exercise to help you lose weight, as this will reduce the strain on your back.
What’s recommend for us all is a well-balanced and healthy diet, which is low in saturated fats, sugar and salt. It’s also a very good idea to eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, and to drink plenty of water.
If you need to lose weight, the key is to regularly burn off more energy than you consume on a daily basis.
Read more about diet .
Pain management programmes
Pain management programmes may help you control your pain and teach you how to live with long-term pain. They’re usually outpatient sessions and involve learning about pain from a physical point of view, but also how it affects your mood and emotional well-being. The sessions will then look at what you can do to overcome difficulties.
Read more about pain and arthritis .
Related information
Find out more about occupational therapy .
Talking therapies
Back pain, especially if it lasts for a long time, can affect people’s mood. If you are feeling really low or anxious, it’s important to talk to someone such as a partner, relative, friend or a doctor. ‘Talking therapies’ can be useful.
For example, cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) can help people with back pain. The aim is to help people to deal with problems in a more positive way, by breaking them down into smaller parts. Your doctor may be able to refer you for CBT, or you might like to consider going private.
Keeping socially and physically active is an important part of helping with low mood and anxiety, and it also helps with pain. Simple things, such as joining a local leisure centre, sports club, walking group, gardening group, or just getting out and seeing friends for a coffee on a regular basis might really help you.
Drugs
If standard painkillers or NSAIDs aren’t working for you, your doctor may suggest some additional treatments.
Amitriptyline
Amitriptyline acts to relax muscles and improve sleep. You’ll usually be prescribed the lowest possible dose to control your symptoms. If the starting dose isn’t working, your dose can be gradually increased. This approach will help to lower the risk of side-effects, which can include a dry mouth, drowsiness and blurred vision.
If you experience these side-effects you should stop the medication and discuss this with your doctor.
Read more about amitriptyline .
Gabapentin/pregabalin
Gabapentin and pregabalin aren’t usually given as a first-line treatment for ‘ordinary’ back pain. Although they might not help much with back pain, they may help sciatica by reducing irritation of the nerves. They may need to be taken for six weeks to begin with, and sometimes longer.
As with all drugs there can be side-effects, so they won’t be suitable for everyone. You should discuss this with your doctor.
Injections
Sometimes injections are useful for back pain or sciatica which is more severe or if the usual treatments like physiotherapy and painkillers aren’t working well enough. For sciatica, these injections are called epidurals, and involve an injection of a steroid, which is a strong anti-inflammatory medicine, and anaesthetic, near the spine or through the tailbone, to try and help with pain from a ‘trapped’ nerve root.
Another type of injection, called radiofrequency denervation, might be used if it is thought that the back pain comes from natural changes that happen over time to the small joints in the spine called facet joints.
Your doctor will send you to see a specialist, to discuss if injections might be an option for your back pain or your sciatica pain. These injections are not always successful, but they do help some people.
Surgery
Very few people with back pain need an operation. Sometimes an operation is needed for spinal stenosis or for severe sciatica to free the nerve, although most doctors would recommend trying other measures first, including medication, physiotherapy or injections.
Urgent surgery may be needed if you lose bladder or bowel control or the use of your legs, but this is extremely rare.
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**4.** <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/back-pain/7-ways-to-treat-chronic-back-pain-without-surgery>

7 Ways to Treat Chronic Back Pain Without Surgery
Andrew Manuel Nava, M.D.
Back pain is considered chronic if it lasts three months or longer. It can come and go, often bringing temporary relief, followed by frustration. Dealing with chronic back pain can be especially trying if you don’t know the cause.
Back pain rehabilitation specialist Andrew Nava, M.D. , offers insights into common chronic back pain causes and nonsurgical treatment options—and advises not to give up hope.
Common Causes of Chronic Back Pain
Chronic back pain is usually age-related, but can also result from a prior injury. The most common causes include:
Arthritis of the spine —the gradual thinning of the cartilage inside the spine
Spinal stenosis —narrowing of the spinal canal that may lead to nerve pain
Disc problems, such as a herniated or bulging disc
Myofascial pain syndrome—unexplained muscle pain and tenderness
In some cases, it’s difficult to pinpoint the cause of chronic back pain. “If your doctor has exhausted all diagnostic options, it’s time to seek a second opinion from a back pain specialist,” recommends Nava. It’s important not to make rushed decisions or undergo extensive medical procedures until the origin of the pain is found. Not only may they not help; they could make the pain worse, warns Nava.
If the source of the pain is not known or can’t be treated, your best option may be to work with your doctor on reducing the flare-ups and making the pain manageable with nonsurgical treatments.
Back Pain Causes and Treatments Webinar | Stephanie Van, M.D.
Chronic back pain is a persistent source of discomfort for many adults. In this webinar, our expert Stephanie Van, M.D., discusses common causes of back pain along with strategies for relief.
Nonsurgical Treatments for Chronic Back Pain
Physical Therapy
Exercise is the foundation of chronic back pain treatment. It’s one of the first treatments you should try under the guidance of your physician and spine physical therapist. However, the same set of exercises doesn’t work for everyone, says Nava. The exercises have to be tailored to your specific symptoms and condition. Maintaining the exercise routine at home is also a big part of success.
Physical therapy for chronic back pain may include:
Retraining your posture
Testing the limits of pain tolerance
Stretching and flexibility exercises
Core strengthening
Mindfulness and Meditation
Chronic back pain is straining both physically and emotionally. To manage the frustration, irritability, depression and other psychological aspects of dealing with chronic pain, you may get referred to a rehabilitation psychologist . This specialist may recommend meditation, yoga, tai chi and othercognitive and relaxation strategies to keep your mind from focusing on pain
Diet
Some diets are highly inflammatory, especially those high in trans fats, refined sugars and processed foods. Consult with your doctor to see if your diet could be contributing to your chronic back pain and how you could change it. Maintaining a healthy weight could also help lessen your back pain by reducing the pressure on your spine.
Lifestyle Modifications
When you have chronic pain, it’s important to accept your limitations and adapt. “Listen to your body and learn to pace yourself,” suggests Nava. Take a break when mowing the lawn, or make several trips when carrying groceries. Take note of the activities that worsen your pain and avoid them if possible. Not only could this help your back feel better, it could also prevent the underlying condition from advancing. Another important lifestyle change to try is giving up smoking. Nicotine is scientifically known to accentuate pain and delay healing.
Injection-based Treatments
Nerve blocks , epidural steroid injections , nerve ablations and other types of injection-based procedures are available for chronic back pain. They are used when the source of the pain is known and can sometimes help rule out certain causes if the treatment doesn’t work. Injections may stop or lessen pain for a certain period of time, but are not intended as long-term solutions and shouldn’t be used in isolation.
Alternative Treatments
Acupuncture, massage, biofeedback therapy , laser therapy, electrical nerve stimulation and other nonsurgical spine treatments can also make a difference for chronic back pain. Talk to your spine specialist about alternative treatments that could benefit you.
Pharmacologic Treatments
Analgesics, anti-inflammatory drugs, muscle relaxants and other medications can be used to help control chronic back pain. However, most come with unwanted side effects and are not intended for prolonged use.
“Opioid medications generally shouldn’t be used as the first, the only or the long-term line of treatment for chronic back pain,” recommends Nava. Many of them are addictive and don’t address the underlying cause of your pain. Opioids should be prescribed only after a thorough exam by a specialist and if other drugs have failed to provide relief. If you find yourself relying on opioids to get through the day, it may be time to seek a second opinion.
When is Surgery a Good Idea for Back Pain?
These red flags can be indicators for surgery, if they’re found to be related to your spine condition:
New or progressing bowel/bladder issues
Weakness in limbs
Gait and balance problems
Evidence of increased (brisk) reflexes
Surgery can also be an option for chronic back pain if there is a known cause confirmed by imaging and if other treatments didn’t help. “Get opinions from at least two surgeons,” suggests Nava, “as pain can still come back after the surgery.”

**5.** <https://www.healthline.com/health/back-pain>

Analgesics, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) , are another category of pain relievers. They are also an option for back pain, though they don’t have the anti-inflammatory properties.
Be careful with medications like ibuprofen if you have kidney problems or stomach ulcers .
Never take more than the recommended dose of over-the-counter medications without a doctor’s recommendation, as even these medications may have severe side effects if taken incorrectly.
Other medication options
:
Topical rubs and ointments
Topical products may be highly effective at reducing back pain. Many of these contain ingredients like ibuprofen and lidocaine and come in the form of:
gels
sprays
Muscle relaxants
Muscle relaxants can also be used for lower back pain, especially if muscle spasms occur alongside pain. These medications act on the central nervous system to reduce pain.
Antidepressants
Antidepressants and other medications can sometimes be used off-label for the treatment of back pain.
If your back pain is severe, your doctor may prescribe amitriptyline , a tricyclic antidepressant, because it focuses on different parts of the pain response. This antidepressant may also work better for nerve-related pain.
Steroid injections
Your doctor might also recommend cortisone steroid injections for certain causes of back pain. For example, a person with back pain that involves a nerve may get a cortisone steroid injection.
Opioids
Opioids are stronger pain medications that can be prescribed for more severe pain. These medications, such as oxycodone (OxyContin) and a combination of acetaminophen and hydrocodone ( Vicodin ), act on the brain cells and body to reduce pain.
Opioids should be used with caution, however, due to a risk of addiction .
Surgery
Surgery is usually reserved for those with structural abnormalities that haven’t responded to nonsurgical treatment with medication and therapy.
Surgery may be an option for people with:
severe, constant pain with identifiable structural abnormalities
nerve compression that causes muscles to become weak
spinal cord compression that limits daily activities
Alternative medicine
causes of lower back pain are strain and problems with back structures.
Strain
Strained muscles often cause back pain. Strain commonly occurs with incorrect lifting of heavy objects and sudden awkward movements.
Strain can also result from overactivity. An example is the sore feeling and stiffness that occurs after a few hours of yard work or playing a sport.
Structural problems
Vertebrae are the interlocking bones stacked on top of one another that make up the spine. Discs are areas of tissue that cushion the spaces between each vertebra. Disc injuries are a
cause of back pain.
Sometimes these discs can bulge, herniate, or rupture. Nerves can get compressed when this happens.
Herniated discs can be very painful. A bulging disc pressing on the nerve that travels from your back and down your leg can cause sciatica or irritation of the sciatic nerve. Sciatica can be experienced in your leg as:
pain
numbness
Arthritis
Spinal osteoarthritis is also a potential cause of back pain. It’s caused by damage and deterioration in the cartilage of joints in your lower back.
Over time, this condition can lead to narrowing of the spinal column, or spinal stenosis .
Osteoporosis
Loss of bone density and thinning of the bone, called osteoporosis , can lead to small fractures in your vertebrae. These fractures can cause serious pain and are referred to as compression fractures .
Other causes of back pain
There are many other potential causes of back pain, but most are rare. Be sure to see a doctor if you experience regular back pain that does not go away.
After ruling out the more common causes of back pain, your doctor will perform tests to determine if you have a rarer cause. These can
:
one of the vertebrae moving out of place and onto a nearby vertebra, called degenerative spondylolisthesis
loss of nerve function at the lower spinal cord, called cauda equina syndrome (a medical emergency)
fungal or bacterial infection of the spine, such as Staphylococcus , E. coli , or tuberculosis
Back pain can have many symptoms, including:
a dull, aching sensation in the lower back
a stabbing or shooting pain that can radiate down the leg to the foot
an inability to stand up straight without pain
a decreased range of motion and reduced ability to flex the back
The symptoms of back pain, if due to strain or misuse, are usually short lived but can last for days or weeks.
Back pain is chronic when symptoms have been present for
3 months.
Back pain symptoms that may indicate a serious problem
See your doctor if back pain doesn’t improve within 2 weeks of developing. There are times when back pain can be a symptom of a serious medical problem.
Symptoms that can indicate a more serious medical problem are:
These tips can help ease back pain when it happens. They can also help you prevent back pain in the first place.
Carry less
Heavy briefcases, laptop bags, suitcases, and purses can add unnecessary stress and strain to your neck and spine.
Try to reduce what you need to carry, and use bags that distribute the weight more evenly, such as a backpack. If you can, use a bag with wheels to keep weight off your back entirely.
Work your core
The muscles in and around your abdomen and back help keep you upright and carry you through your physical activities. Strengthening them can also reduce the chances of pain, strain, or damage to your back.
Plug strength training workouts with a core focus into your regular fitness routine a few times a week.
Improve your posture
are a smoker
have been diagnosed with a specific condition like arthritis
Your mental health also has an effect on your risk of back pain. You may be at a higher risk of back pain if you have a stressful job or have depression and anxiety .
Back pain and pregnancy
Back pain during each trimester of your pregnancy can be common, and several causes are to blame. However, you should be sure to talk with your doctor about what you’re experiencing, in case the pain may be part of a bigger problem.
Here are a few reasons why you may be experiencing back pain during pregnancy:
Shifting center of gravity
As your baby grows, the center of your body’s “gravity” moves outward. Your spine and back arch to make up for the change in balance. This put extra stress on the lower lumbar spine.
Weight gain
Weight gain can be a healthy part of pregnancy, but even the little bit you’re likely to gain during those 9 months can put more stress on your back and core muscles.
Hormones
As your body prepares to deliver the baby, it releases hormones that loosen the ligaments that stabilize your pelvis and lumbar spine. These same hormones can cause the bones in your spine to shift, which may lead to discomfort and pain.
Exercises to help your back pain
Gentle stretches and easy exercises can help ease back pain and prevent future problems.
Here are two exercises you can try. These moves require no special equipment and can be performed anywhere you can access an area of open floor. A yoga mat is recommended but not necessary.
Bridges
Lie on the ground with your feet flat on the floor, hip-width apart.
With your hands by your sides, press your feet into the floor as you slowly lift your buttocks off the ground until your body is in one straight line. Keep your shoulders on the floor.
Lower down. Rest for 1 minute.
Repeat 15 times.
Perform 3 sets.
Lie on your stomach. Stretch your arms above your head and lengthen your legs straight behind you.
Slowly lift your hands and feet off the ground. Start about 6 inches off the ground and go higher as you feel comfortable.
Push through your belly button to lift your legs and arms off the ground. Stop when you feel your lower back contract. To prevent neck strain, keep your head down, looking at the ground.
Hold your stretched posture for 2 to 3 seconds.
Return to neutral and relax your muscles.
Repeat this stretch 10 to 12 times.
can
also be a great way to ease muscle pain. Certain yoga poses can help stretch and strengthen the muscles in your core and back, too. That can ease pain and prevent future back problems.
Practice these yoga poses for a few minutes every day. They’re great for beginners. You can add new ones later for more strenuous stretching.
Cat-Cow
Lower to the floor and get on your hands and knees.
Align your body so your hands are directly below your shoulders and your knees are under your hips. Evenly balance your weight on all fours.
Slowly inhale air and look up at the wall in front of you. Let your stomach drop toward the mat.
Slowly exhale the air, tuck your chin to your chest, draw your navel toward the back of your spine, and arch your back.
Turn steps 3 and 4 into a continuous movement and repeat for at least 1 minute.
Sphinx pose
Lie on your stomach. Stretch your legs straight behind you. Rest your hands, palms down, beside your shoulders.
Engage your core, lower back, and buttocks muscles to slowly lift your upper torso and head away from the ground. Use your arms for support only.
Draw on your lower back and push your belly button into the ground to maintain the stretch.
Remain in this stretch for 2 to 3 minutes.
Relax and return to the ground.
As your muscles grow stronger, you can hold this pose longer. Work toward 5 minutes.

**6.** <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/back-pain>

We have no data for this page, because it isn't accessible for our crawler.

**7.** <https://www.spine-health.com/conditions/lower-back-pain/lower-back-pain-symptoms-diagnosis-and-treatment>

Lower Back Pain Symptoms, Diagnosis, and Treatment
Peer Reviewed
The lumbar spine, or low back, is a remarkably well-engineered structure of interconnecting bones, joints, nerves, ligaments, and muscles all working together to provide support, strength, and flexibility. However, this complex structure also leaves the low back susceptible to injury and pain.
Watch: Lumbar Spine Anatomy Video
This article presents a model for understanding symptoms, physical findings, imaging studies, and injection techniques to come to a precise diagnosis.
Once an accurate diagnosis of the cause of the lower back pain is attained, treatment options can be selected based on today’s best medical practices.
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The Lumbar Spine, What Can Go Wrong
The low back supports the weight of the upper body and provides mobility for everyday motions such as bending and twisting. Muscles in the low back are responsible for flexing and rotating the hips while walking, as well as supporting the spinal column. Nerves in the low back supply sensation and power the muscles in the pelvis, legs, and feet.
See Back Muscles and Low Back Pain
Most acute low back pain results from injury to the muscles, ligaments, joints, or discs. The body also reacts to injury by mobilizing an inflammatory healing response. While inflammation sounds minor, it can cause severe pain.
There is a significant overlap of nerve supply to many of the discs, muscles, ligaments, and other spinal structures, and it can be difficult for the brain to accurately sense which is the cause of the pain. For example, a degenerated or torn lumbar disc can feel the same as a pulled muscle – both creating inflammation and painful muscle spasm in the same area. Muscles and ligaments heal rapidly, while a torn disc may or may not. The time course of pain helps determine the cause.
In This Article:
Causes of Lower Back Pain Video
Range of Lower Back Pain Symptoms
Low back pain can incorporate a wide variety of symptoms. It can be mild and merely annoying or it can be severe and debilitating. Low back pain may start suddenly, or it could start slowly—possibly coming and going—and gradually get worse over time.
Depending on the underlying cause of the pain, symptoms can be experienced in a variety of ways. For example:
Pain that is dull or achy, contained to the low back
Stinging, burning pain that moves from the low back to the backs of the thighs, sometimes into the lower legs or feet; can include numbness or tingling (sciatica)
Muscle spasms and tightness in the low back, pelvis, and hips
Pain that worsens after prolonged sitting or standing
Difficulty standing up straight, walking, or going from standing to sitting
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In addition, symptoms of lower back pain are usually described by type of onset and duration:
Acute pain. This type of pain typically comes on suddenly and lasts for a few days or weeks, and is considered a normal response of the body to injury or tissue damage. The pain gradually subsides as the body heals.
Subacute low back pain. Lasting between 6 weeks and 3 months, this type of pain is usually mechanical in nature (such as a muscle strain or joint pain) but is prolonged. At this point, a medical workup may be considered, and is advisable if the pain is severe and limits one’s ability to participate in activities of daily living, sleeping, and working.
Chronic back pain. Usually defined as lower back pain that lasts over 3 months, this type of pain is usually severe, does not respond to initial treatments, and requires a thorough medical workup to determine the exact source of the pain. 1
Types of Low Back Pain
There are many ways to categorize low back pain – two common types include:
Mechanical pain. By far the most common cause of lower back pain, mechanical pain ( axial pain ) is pain primarily from the muscles, ligaments, joints (facet joints, sacroiliac joints), or bones in and around the spine. This type of pain tends to be localized to the lower back, buttocks, and sometimes the top of the legs. It is usually influenced by loading the spine and may feel different based on motion (forward/backward/twisting), activity, standing, sitting, or resting.
Radicular pain. This type of pain can occur if a spinal nerve root becomes impinged or inflamed. Radicular pain may follow a nerve root pattern or dermatome down into the buttock and/or leg. Its specific sensation is sharp, electric, burning-type pain and can be associated with numbness or weakness ( sciatica ). It is typically felt on only one side of the body.
See Radiculopathy, Radiculitis and Radicular Pain
There are many additional sources of pain, including claudication pain (from stenosis) myelopathic pain, neuropathic pain, deformity, tumors, infections, pain from inflammatory conditions (such as rheumatoid arthritis or ankylosing spondylitis ), and pain that originates from another part of the body and presents in the lower back (such as kidney stones, or ulcerative colitis).
It is also possible for low back pain to develop with no definitive cause. When this happens, the primary focus is on treating the symptoms (rather than the cause of the symptoms) and the patient’s overall health.
For subacute and chronic lower back pain, a thorough diagnosis is important to lay the foundation for appropriate treatment and rehabilitation. Lower back pain treatment reduces the likelihood of recurrent back pain flare-ups and helps prevent the development of chronic lower back pain.
References

**8.** <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/172943>

Prevention
Back pain is a common reason for absence from work and for seeking medical treatment. It can be uncomfortable and debilitating.
It can result from injury, activity and some medical conditions. Back pain can affect people of any age, for different reasons. As people get older, the
chance of developing
lower back pain increases, due to factors such as previous occupation and degenerative disk disease.
Lower back pain may be linked to the bony lumbar spine, discs between the vertebrae, ligaments around the spine and discs, spinal cord and nerves, lower back muscles, abdominal and pelvic internal organs, and the skin around the lumbar area.
Pain in the upper back may be due to disorders of the aorta, tumors in the chest, and spine inflammation .
Causes
Problems with the spine such as osteoporosis can lead to back pain.
The human back is composed of a complex structure of muscles, ligaments, tendons, disks, and bones, which work together to support the body and enable us to move around.
The segments of the spine are cushioned with cartilage-like pads called disks.
Problems with any of these components can lead to back pain. In some cases of back pain, its cause remains unclear.
Damage can result from strain, medical conditions, and poor posture, among others.
Strain
Activities that can lead to strains or spasms include:
lifting something improperly
lifting something that is too heavy
making an abrupt and awkward movement
Structural problems
A number of structural problems may also result in back pain.
Ruptured disks: Each vertebra in the spine is cushioned by disks. If the disk ruptures there will be more pressure on a nerve, resulting in back pain.
Bulging disks: In much the same way as ruptured disks, a bulging disk can result in more pressure on a nerve.
Sciatica: A sharp and shooting pain travels through the buttock and down the back of the leg, caused by a bulging or herniated disk pressing on a nerve.
Arthritis: Osteoarthritis can cause problems with the joints in the hips, lower back, and other places. In some cases, the space around the spinal cord narrows. This is known as spinal stenosis.
Abnormal curvature of the spine: If the spine curves in an unusual way, back pain can result. An example is scoliosis , in which the spine curves to the side.
Osteoporosis: Bones, including the vertebrae of the spine, become brittle and porous, making compression fractures more likely.
Kidney problems: Kidney stones or kidney infection can cause back pain.
Movement and posture
Adopting a very hunched sitting position when using computers can result in increased back and shoulder problems over time.
Back pain can also result from some everyday activities or poor posture.
Examples include:
bending awkwardly or for long periods
pushing, pulling, lifting, or carrying something
standing or sitting for long periods
straining the neck forward, such as when driving or using a computer
long driving sessions without a break, even when not hunched
sleeping on a mattress that does not support the body and keep the spine straight
Other causes
Some medical conditions can lead to back pain.
Cauda equina syndrome: The cauda equine is a bundle of spinal nerve roots that arise from the lower end of the spinal cord. Symptoms include a dull pain in the lower back and upper buttocks, as well as numbness in the buttocks, genitalia, and thighs. There are sometimes bowel and bladder function disturbances.
Cancer of the spine: A tumor on the spine may press against a nerve, resulting in back pain.
Infection of the spine: A fever and a tender, warm area on the back could be due to an infection of the spine.
Other infections: Pelvic inflammatory disease, bladder, or kidney infections may also lead to back pain.
Sleep disorders: Individuals with sleep disorders are more likely to experience back pain, compared with others.
Shingles: An infection that can affect the nerves may lead to back pain. This depends on which nerves are affected.
A doctor will usually be able to diagnose back pain after asking about symptoms and carrying out a physical examination.
An imaging scan and other tests may be required if:
back pain appears to result from an injury
there may be underlying cause that needs treatment
the pain persists over a long period
An X-ray, MRI , or CT scan can give information about the state of the soft tissues in the back.
X-rays can show the alignment of the bones and detect signs of arthritis or broken bones, but they may not reveal damage in the muscles, spinal cord, nerves, or disks.
MRI or CT scans can reveal herniated disks or problems with tissue, tendons, nerves, ligaments, blood vessels, muscles, and bones.
Bone scans can detect bone tumors or compression fractures caused by osteoporosis . A radioactive substance or tracer is injected into a vein. The tracer collects in the bones and helps the doctor detect bone problems with the aid of a special camera.
Electromyography or EMG measures the electrical impulses produced by nerves in response to muscles. This can confirm nerve compression, which may occur with a herniated disk or spinal stenosis.
The doctor may also order a blood test if infection is suspected.
Other types of diagnosis
A chiropractor will diagnose through touch, or palpation, and a visual examination. Chiropractic is known as a direct approach, with a strong focus on adjusting the spinal joints. A chiropractor may also want to see the results of imaging scans and any blood and urine tests.
An osteopath also diagnoses through palpation and visual inspection. Osteopathy involves slow and rhythmic stretching, known as mobilization, pressure or indirect techniques, and manipulation of joints and muscles.
A physical therapist focuses on diagnosing problems in the joints and soft tissues of the body.
Chronic or acute pain?
:
Acute pain starts suddenly and lasts for up to 6 weeks.
Chronic or long-term pain develops over a longer period, lasts for over 3 months, and causes ongoing problems.
If a person has both occasional bouts of more intense pain and fairly continuous mild back pain, it can be hard for a doctor to determine whether they have acute or chronic back pain.
Back pain usually resolves with rest and home remedies, but sometimes medical treatment is necessary.
Home treatments
Over-the-counter (OTC) pain relief medication, usually nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs ( NSAID ), such as ibuprofen, can relieve discomfort. Applying a hot compress or an ice pack to the painful area may also reduce pain.
Resting from strenuous activity can help, but moving around will ease stiffness, reduce pain, and prevent muscles from weakening.
Medical treatment
If home treatments do not relieve back pain, a doctor may recommend the following medication, physical therapy , or both.
Medication: Back pain that does not respond well to OTC painkillers may require a prescription NSAID. Codeine or hydrocodone, which are narcotics, may be prescribed for short periods. These require close monitoring by the doctor. In some cases, muscle relaxants may be used.
such as amitriptyline
, may be prescribed, but research is ongoing at to their effectiveness, and the evidence is conflicting.
Physical therapy: Applying heat, ice, ultrasound , and electrical stimulation — as well as some muscle-release techniques to the back muscles and soft tissues — may help alleviate pain.
As the pain improves, the physical therapist may introduce some flexibility and strength exercises for the back and abdominal muscles. Techniques for improving posture may also help.
The patient will be encouraged to practice the techniques regularly, even after the pain has gone, to prevent back pain recurrence.
Cortisone injections: If other options are not effective, these may be injected into the epidural space, around the spinal cord. Cortisone is an anti-inflammatory drug. It helps reduce inflammation around the nerve roots. Injections may also be used to numb areas thought to be causing the pain.
Botox : Botox ( botulism toxin), according to some early studies, are thought to
reduce pain
by paralyzing sprained muscles in spasm. These injections are effective for about 3 to 4 months.
Traction: Pulleys and weights are used to stretch the back. This may result in a herniated disk moving back into position. It can also relieve pain, but only while traction is applied.
Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT): CBT can help manage chronic back pain by encouraging new ways of thinking. It may include relaxation techniques and ways of maintaining a positive attitude. Studies have found that patients with CBT tend to become more active and do exercise, resulting in a lower risk of back pain recurrence.
Complementary therapies
Complementary therapies may be used alongside conventional therapies or on their own.
Chiropractic, osteopathy, shiatsu, and acupuncture may help relieve back pain, as well as encouraging the patient to feel relaxed.
An osteopath specializes in treating the skeleton and muscles.
A chiropractor treats joint, muscle and bone problems. The main focus is the spine.
Shiatsu, also known as finger pressure therapy, is a type of massage where pressure is applied along energy lines in the body. The shiatsu therapist applies pressure with the fingers, thumbs and elbows.
Acupuncture originates from China. It consists of inserting fine needles and specific points in the body. Acupuncture can help the body release its natural painkillers — endorphins — as well as stimulating nerve and muscle tissue.
Yoga involves specific poses, movements, and breathing exercises. Some may help strengthen the back muscles and improve posture. Care must be taken that exercises do not make back pain worse.
Studies on complementary therapies have given mixed results. Some people have experienced significant benefit, while others have not. It is important, when considering alternative therapies, to use a well qualified and registered therapist.
Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) is a popular therapy for patients with chronic back pain. The TENS machine delivers small electric pulses into the body through electrodes that are placed on the skin.
Experts believe TENS encourages the body to produce endorphins and may block pain signals returning to the brain. Studies on TENS have provided mixed results. Some revealed no benefits, while others indicated that it could be helpful for some people.
A TENS machine should be used under the direction of a doctor or health professional.
It should not be used by someone who is:
is pregnant
has a history of heart disease
TENS is considered “safe, noninvasive, inexpensive, and patient friendly,” and it appears to reduce pain, but
to confirm its effectiveness in improving activity levels.
Surgery
Surgery for back pain is very rare. If a patient has a herniated disk surgery may be an option, especially if there is persistent pain and nerve compression which can lead to muscle weakness.
Examples of surgical procedures include:
Fusion: Two vertebrae are joined together, with a bone graft inserted between them. The vertebrae are splinted together with metal plates, screws or cages. There is a significantly greater risk for arthritis to subsequently develop in the adjoining vertebrae.
Artificial disk: An artificial disk is inserted; it replaces the cushion between two vertebrae.
Diskectomy: A portion of a disk may be removed if it is irritating or pressing against a nerve.
Partially removing a vertebra: A small section of a vertebra may be removed if it is pinching the spinal cord or nerves.
Injecting cells to regenerate spine discs: Scientists from Duke University, North Carolina, developed new biomaterials that can deliver a booster shot of reparative cells to the nucleus pulposus, effectively eliminating pain caused by degenerative disc disease.
lower the risk
of developing back pain consist mainly of addressing some of the risk factors.
Exercise: Regular exercise helps build strength and control body weight . Guided, low-impact aerobic activities can boost heart health without straining or jerking the back. Before starting any exercise program, talk to a health care professional.
There are two main types of exercise that people can do to reduce the risk of back pain:
Core-strengthening exercises work the abdominal and back muscles, helping to strengthen muscles that protect the back.
Flexibility training aims at improving core flexibility, including the spine, hips, and upper legs.
Diet: Make sure your diet includes enough calcium and vitamin D , as these are needed for bone health. A healthful diet also helps control body weight.
Smoking: A significantly higher percentage of smokers have back pain incidences compared to non-smokers of the same age, height, and weight.
Body weight: The weight people carry and where they carry it affects the risk of developing back pain. The difference in back pain risk between obese and normal-weight individuals is considerable. People who carry their weight in the abdominal area versus the buttocks and hip area are also at greater risk.
Posture when standing: Make sure you have a neutral pelvic position. Stand upright, head facing forward, back straight, and balance your weight evenly on both feet. Keep your legs straight and your head in line with your spine.
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Posture when sitting: A good seat for working should have good back support, arm rests and a swivel base. When sitting, try to keep your knees and hips level and keep your feet flat on the floor, or use a footstool. You should ideally be able to sit upright with support in the small of your back. If you are using a keyboard, make sure your elbows are at right-angles and that your forearms are horizontal.
Lifting: When lifting things, use your legs to do the lifting, rather than your back.
Keep your back as straight as you can, keeping your feet apart with one leg slightly forward so you can maintain balance. Bend only at the knees, hold the weight close to your body, and straighten the legs while changing the position of your back as little as possible.
Bending your back initially is unavoidable, but when you bend your back try not to stoop, and be sure to tighten your stomach muscles so that your pelvis is pulled in. Most important, do not straighten your legs before lifting, or you will be using your back for most of the work.
Do not lift and twist at the same time: If something is particularly heavy, see if you can lift it with someone else. While you are lifting keep looking straight ahead, not up or down, so that the back of your neck is like a continuous straight line from your spine.
Moving things: It is better for your back to push things across the floor, using your leg strength, rather than pulling them.
Shoes: Flat shoes place less of a strain on the back.
Driving: It is important to have proper support for your back. Make sure the wing mirrors are properly positioned so you do not need to twist. The pedals should be squarely in front of your feet. If you are on a long journey, have plenty of breaks. Get out of the car and walk around.
Bed: You should have a mattress that keeps your spine straight, while at the same time supporting the weight of your shoulders and buttocks. Use a pillow, but not one that forces your neck into a steep angle.

**9.** <https://msk.org.au/back-pain/>

Back pain is a common problem
It’s usually not the result of a serious injury or disease
There are many things that you can do to live well with it
Learning about your back pain and the best ways to manage it is the first step
If you have back pain, you’re not alone. It’s a common problem experienced by many people. In fact, 1 in 6 Australians reported back problems in 2017-18. That’s close to 4 million people. (1)
Back pain is any pain you feel in your back – from your neck to your buttocks. It’s most commonly experienced in the lower (or lumbar) spine.
Back pain can be acute or persistent.
Acute back pain usually begins quickly and lasts for a relatively short time. It may be due to something you did, such as a sudden twisting movement while playing sport, a fall or accident, or overdoing it in the garden. Or there may be nothing you can identify as the trigger for your pain.
Persistent back pain, also called chronic back pain, is pain that lasts for more than three months. Even if pain persists, it generally doesn’t mean there’s a serious underlying cause or that it can’t be treated effectively.
Back pain can affect people at any age but most often appears during adolescence and increases into early adulthood.
How your back works
Your back is amazing. It’s strong, flexible and made for movement. It supports your body and allows you to bend, twist, lift things and get around. But when you’re in pain, it doesn’t feel amazing.
So to better understand your back and back pain, let’s take a closer look at how it’s structured.
Your backbone (spine or spinal column) is made up of bones called vertebrae stacked on top of each other to form an ‘S’-shaped column.
The spinal cord, which transports messages to and from the brain and the rest of the body, runs down a bony tunnel behind the vertebral bodies where it’s protected from damage. It runs through the length of the spinal column.
Each vertebra is cushioned by spongy tissue called intervertebral discs. These discs act as shock absorbers. Vertebrae are joined together by small joints (facet joints), which allow the vertebrae to slide against each other, enabling you to twist and turn. Tough, flexible bands of soft tissue (ligaments) also hold the spine in position.
Layers of muscle provide structural support and help you move. They’re joined to bone by strong tissue (tendons).
The spine is divided into five regions. They are:
cervical spine (neck): at the top of the spine are seven vertebrae. Your doctor may sometimes refer to them by letter and number, for example, C1 – the 1st vertebrae in the cervical spine; to C7 – the 7th vertebrae in the cervical spine.
thoracic spine (middle back): has 12 vertebrae (T1 to T12). This is where your ribs attach to the spine.
lumbar spine (lower back): has five vertebrae (L1 to L5). The lumbar spine connects to the pelvis.
sacrum: is a triangular-shaped bone that connects to the hips. It’s made up of the five fused sacral vertebrae (S1 to S5).
coccyx (tailbone): at the base of your spine are four fused vertebrae. Your pelvic floor muscles and ligaments attach here.
As you can see, the structures and soft tissues in your back are tough, flexible and designed to move, carry weight and support you
Causes of back pain
Many things can cause back pain; however, often there’s no specific cause.
In most cases (90-95%), the cause of back pain is unknown. This is non-specific back pain. While this may sound frustratingly vague, the good news is that most back pain isn’t caused by a specific condition, illness or serious damage to the back.
Non-specific back pain may be caused by:
soft tissue sprains and strains
stress
Back pain with a specific cause is less common (~5%). It includes things such as:
inflammatory arthritis – spondyloarthropathy and ankylosing spondylitis are two types of arthritis linked to back pain
osteoarthritis
bone fracture – e.g. due to an accident or a condition such as osteoporosis
herniated disc (sometimes called disc protrusion). This occurs when the intervertebral disc becomes weakened, causing it to bulge, sometimes pressing on nerves. However, it doesn’t ‘slip’ or move out of place.
Very rarely (less than 1%) back pain can signify a spine infection or cancer. Your GP will look for symptoms and signs associated with these conditions.
There’s no evidence that back pain is caused by:
getting older
everyday bending and lifting.
Diagnosis
If you have back pain that’s causing you distress or affecting your ability to do your daily activities, you should see your doctor. Your doctor will:
ask you questions about your back pain, including potential causes or triggers, if you’ve experienced it before, and how it affects you
ask about any other symptoms or health issues you have
do a thorough physical examination.
In most cases of back pain, imaging (e.g. x-rays, CT or MRI scans) isn’t helpful or recommended as they aren’t good at identifying the cause of pain. They also don’t change how your back pain will be managed. A thorough examination by your doctor will decide whether any scans are appropriate.
It‘s also important to know that many investigations show ‘changes’ to your spine that are likely to represent the normal passage of time, not damage to your spine.
For more information about questions to ask your doctor before you get any test, treatment or procedure visit the Choosing Wisely Australia website.
Treatment
Back pain usually goes away on its own, but if it’s causing you pain or distress, there are things you can do to manage it effectively. This includes self-care and lifestyle changes such as exercise , stress management and improving sleep quality . Some people may need to use medicines for a short period to help them get back to their usual activities.
What can I do to manage my back pain and prevent future problems?
There are many things you can do:
Learn more about your back pain – what makes it better, what makes it worse? Knowing as much as possible about your back pain means that you can make informed decisions about your healthcare and play an active role in managing it.
Exercise regularly . In the case of back pain, movement is medicine. Although you might think you need to protect your back from further pain by not moving it or by resting it, your back is made for movement. And resting can make things worse. Evidence shows that regular exercise improves symptoms such as pain, fatigue and poor sleep. It’s also vital for maintaining flexibility, muscle strength, and bone health. When starting an exercise program, you should try to incorporate exercises that improve flexibility, muscle strength, balance, and overall fitness and endurance. Start exercising slowly and gradually increase the time and intensity of your exercise sessions over weeks and months. A physiotherapist or exercise physiologist can help you work out an exercise program right for you.
Move naturally. This can be challenging when dealing with back pain, but the more relaxed and natural your movements are, and the less you protect or guard your back, the better your back pain will be. When you feel yourself tensing your back muscles or moving stiffly, stop, breathe deeply and relax your body.
Manage your weight . Your spine supports your weight as you walk and move around. When you’re carrying extra weight, this adds additional load to your spine. That’s why it’s important to keep to a healthy weight. Your doctor or dietitian can advise you on safe weight-loss strategies if you need to lose weight.
Quit smoking . As well as the obvious links to cancer and lung disease, smoking increases your risk of developing back pain , neck pain , rheumatoid arthritis and osteoporosis . It also causes fatigue and slower healing, which can make your pain worse. But Quitting can be challenging, so reach out for help when you decide to quit. Talk to your doctor, contact Quitline (137 848) or ICanQuit and get your family involved.
Manage your stress. Living with persistent back pain can be stressful. And stress can make your pain worse by causing the muscles throughout your body to tense or spasm. By easing your stress and muscle tension, you can help to reduce your pain levels and create a better sense of overall wellbeing.
Look after your mental health. Both anxiety and depression are more common in people with ongoing and unpredictable health conditions like back pain. So it’s reassuring to know that there is help available and that there are effective treatments available. Chatting to your GP is often a good place to start. Your GP can recommend and link you to a mental health professional . If needed, they can work with you to create a mental health treatment plan. This means Medicare will pay for part of the cost for you to see certain mental health professionals.
Get back to your normal activities. Try to be as active as possible and get on with your day-to-day life, including work and exercise. If you’re returning to heavy manual jobs, this may take longer.
Relax. Learn some relaxation techniques to reduce stress levels and related muscle tension. Try massage , heat packs and gentle exercise .
Try mindfulness . This form of meditation has been proven to reduce pain.
What medicines are used to treat back pain?
Medicines may help reduce the pain you’re experiencing. But it’s important to understand that they may not get rid of your pain completely. This doesn’t mean your back is damaged.
Talk with your doctor or pharmacist for advice about pain medicines. There are different types available, both over-the-counter and by prescription. They include:
Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) . NSAIDs have side effects, so it’s best to use the lowest dose for the shortest period.
Topicals . These are rubs, gels, ointments, sprays, patches and creams applied to your skin (topically). Some topicals contain medicines such as NSAIDs and corticosteroids.
Medicines that aren’t effective for back pain are:
Paracetamol. Research has shown that paracetamol has no effect on back pain – both acute and persistent.
Opioids. Although opioids have commonly been prescribed to treat back pain, there’s no evidence that they provide any greater benefit than NSAIDs for acute back pain. They may offer short-term relief for people with persistent back pain; however, there’s no evidence of long-term benefit. They also have a high risk of serious side effects and the potential to cause harm. Before prescribing an opioid, you and your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits for you. Read the Choosing Wisely Australia patient guide ‘ 5 Questions to ask about using opioids for back pain or osteoarthritis ’ for more information about opioids.
Are there any red flags I need to be aware of?
Although it’s very rare, back pain can be caused by something more serious. Signs you should be aware of include:
severe pain that gets worse over time instead of better
you’re generally unwell with your back pain or have a fever
problems controlling your bladder or bowel
numbness, pins-and-needles in your legs, between your legs, or feet
weakness in your legs or unsteadiness on your feet
unexplained weight loss
redness or swelling on your back.
If you experience these symptoms, contact your doctor, or call the Healthdirect Helpline on 1800 022 222. Registered nurses are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide advice.
Where to get help

**10.** <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/standards/clinical-care-standards/low-back-pain-clinical-care-standard>

Low Back Pain Clinical Care Standard
Low Back Pain Clinical Care Standard
Clinical Care Standards 2021
Logo
The Low Back Pain Clinical Care Standard aims to improve the early assessment, management, review and appropriate referral of patients with this common health condition.
The national standard was released by the Commission on 1 September 2022.
Aged Care Quality Standards – Clinical Care
National launch and live webcast
Experts in pain management, emergency medicine, physiotherapy and general practice discuss and explain the Low Back Pain Clinical Care Standard at its launch on 1 September 2022.
Communications resources
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Low back pain is a common form of back problem that affects most people at some point in their lives1. As well as pain, it often leads to psychological distress and poorer quality of life2,3.4 and is a leading cause of disability worldwide5.
Contents of the standard and resources
The Low Back Pain Clinical Care Standard includes:
Eight quality statements describing the care that should be provided
A set of indicators to support monitoring and quality improvement
Information and resources are available for consumers , clinicians , and healthcare services , or you can see the complete list of implementation resources .
Consultation and endorsement
The standard was developed in consultation with a topic working group of clinicians, researchers and consumers. Public consultation on the clinical care standard was carried out between March and April 2021.
The standard has been endorsed by 18 key professional associations and consumer organisations including the Australian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM), Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA), Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR), Spine Society of Australia (SSA) and the Australian Pain Society (APS).
The standard is supported by the Consumer Health Forum (CHF) and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).
Evidence base
Further information is available on the evidence base which underpins the Low Back Pain Clinical Care Standard, and the rapid literature and evidence review commissioned to inform the standard’s development.
Background
In Australia, back problems are the number one cause of lost work productivity, early retirement and income poverty.6,7,8,9,10 In 2018–19, more money was spent on managing musculoskeletal disorders, including back problems, than any other category of disease, condition or injury in Australia.11
The Australian Atlas of Healthcare Variation series has identified marked variation across Australia relevant to the care of low back pain, including in:
Computed tomography (CT) of the lumbar spine12
Opioid medicine use12,13
Lumbar spinal surgery.12,13,14
The Second Australian Atlas of Healthcare Variation (second Atlas) identified a need for comprehensive Australian guidance on the early management of low back pain, based on the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guideline Low Back Pain and Sciatica in Over 16s: Assessment and management, and other relevant high-quality Australian and international evidence.14
The second Atlas recommended that the Australian guidance support appropriate early management, and ensure that patients are informed about and understand the range of treatment options available for low back pain, their risks and their likelihood of benefit.14
Improved uptake of guideline recommendations for management of low back pain has been shown to result in better patient outcomes, such as in the extent and rate of recovery and a reduced need for ongoing care.15,16 It could also lead to more judicious use of imaging; lead to more appropriate use of opioids, other medicines and invasive therapies; and ultimately mean that more patients receive high‑value care.7,17,18,19
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