



BACK TO BASICS

A NO NONSENSE
GUIDE TO MANAGING
BACK PAIN...

NATURALLY

Including expert advice from Garry Trainer D.O. B.Ac.,
a practising osteopath and acupuncturist to the stars.

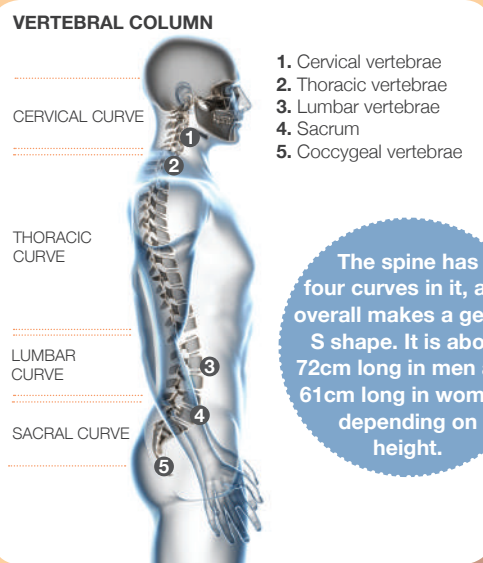
BACK to Basics

According to the NHS, lower back pain, also known as lumbago, affects seven out of 10 people at some time in their lives and it is more common in people between 35 and 55.¹ The good news is that about 90% of cases of back pain improve within six weeks.

Different treatments work better for different types of back pain, so it's important to decide what type yours is:

THE SPINE OR VERTEBRAL COLUMN IS MADE UP OF 33 VERTEBRAE

- 7 cervical vertebrae in the neck
- 12 thoracic vertebrae in the back and chest where the pairs of ribs are attached
- 5 lumbar vertebrae in the back and lower back
- 5 sacral vertebra that are fused together to make the sacrum in the lower spine
- 4 vertebrae that are fused together to make the coccyx or tailbone



WHAT CAUSES BACK PAIN?



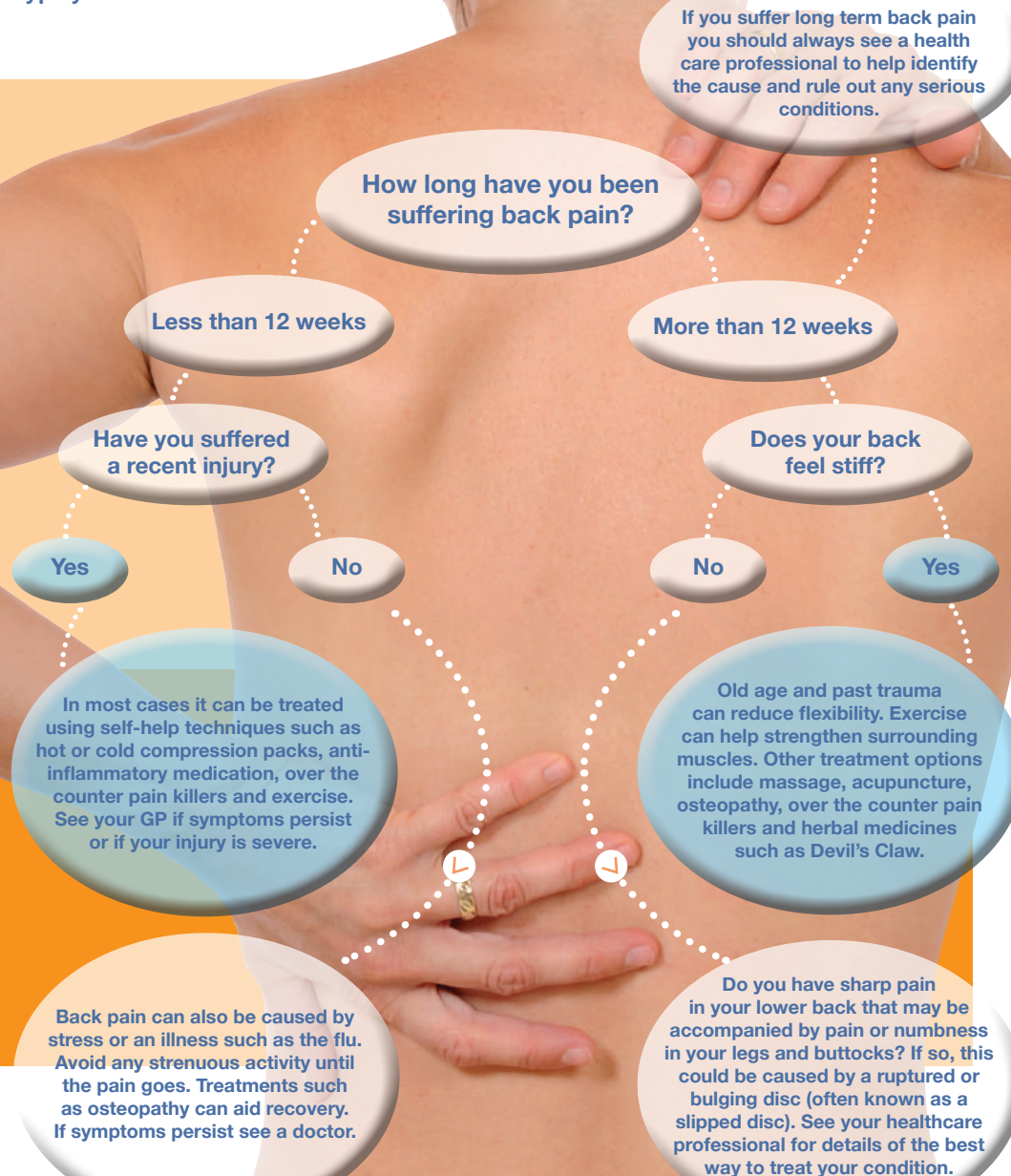
- The most common cause is a strain of the back, which is a small tear of the back muscles or ligaments. This usually results from a sudden or awkward movement or from lifting a heavy object. But often, a person can't remember a particular incident that brought on the pain.
- Other common causes include being overweight, poor muscle tone in the back, lack of core strength, tension or spasm of the back muscles and problems with the joints that make up the back.

Did You Know?

Back pain causes up to five million lost working days per year and costs the UK about £5 billion per year (including costs for the NHS, business and the economy).

Source: British Medical Journal, 2008

1. NHS Choices website <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/back-pain/Pages/Introduction.aspx>



How to cope with Back Pain in everyday life



Anyone who has suffered from back pain will know just how difficult it is to cope with the day to day activities when it strikes. Leading back specialist, Garry Trainer has over twenty five years of clinical experience as an osteopath, acupuncturist and masseur. Here he gives his top tips on how to manage back pain in everyday life, from shopping to sex.

www.garrytrainer.com

Shopping



- ✓ When carrying heavy shopping try to make sure that you evenly distribute the weight i.e. if possible carry the same amount of bags in each hand
- ✓ When carrying anything heavy try to keep it as close to your body as possible
- ✓ If you have to put your bags or heavy box down make sure you bend your knees, keeping your back straight to pick them up, using your knees and legs to take the strain rather than your back

Driving



- ✓ Sit straight and try not to slouch. A lumbar support cushion can assist better posture and make for a more comfortable drive
- ✓ Try sucking your stomach muscles in towards your lower back as this helps strengthen your core muscles
- ✓ Wiggle around to get some movement to your lower back
- ✓ If you are on a long drive, do try to stop at least every 2 hours to move around or ideally stretch your back and legs

Gardening



- ✓ Garden in short bursts and make sure to take regular breaks
- ✓ Try sitting or kneeling rather than continually bending forward
- ✓ Ask someone to do any heavy lifting for you

Housework



- ✓ When vacuuming keep your back straight and try not to slump forward
- ✓ When standing for extended periods try standing on one leg then the other to distribute weight bearing evenly
- ✓ When sorting your clothes for laundry, use a table instead of the floor so you don't have to bend down
- ✓ If you have sheets and blankets on your bed, use a duvet so that there is only one thing to straighten on the bed, preventing the constant bending to put sheets and blankets in order

Childcare



- ✓ Bend your knees and not your back when picking up your child
- ✓ Try not to carry children on just one hip for extended periods – remember to swap hips
- ✓ Change nappies on a high surface to prevent bending forwards
- ✓ Hold your baby close to you

Sex

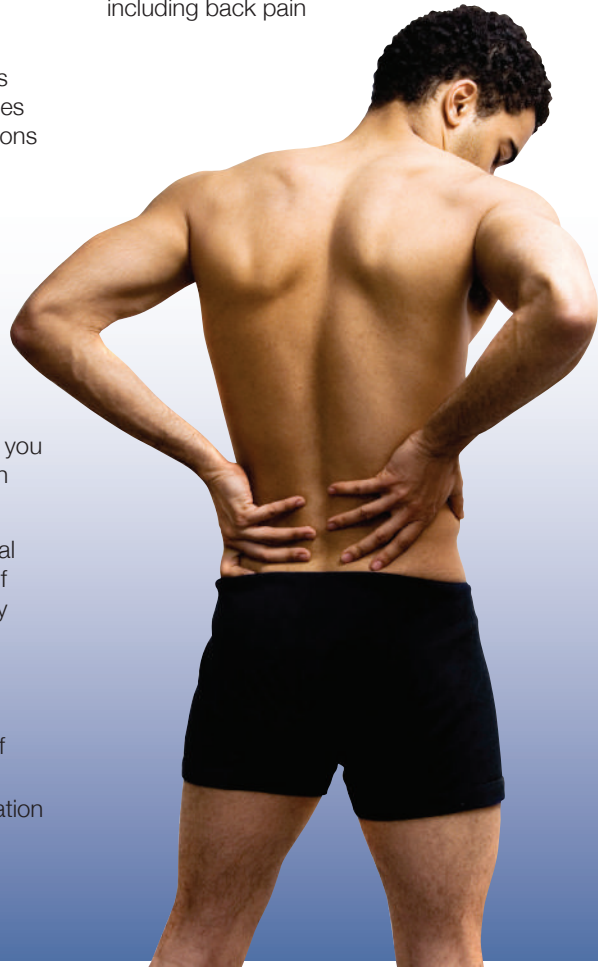


- ✓ You may well find one position more comfortable than another. As often as possible try experimenting with different positions until you find which is most comfortable for you – you might find lying on your side works
- ✓ If your back is not feeling that good get your partner to take the more active role...just lay back and enjoy it!

Garry Trainer's Top 10 Tips

to help **YOU** cope with **Back Pain...naturally**

- 1 **Reduce weight where possible.** This will take a lot of the load off the back
- 2 **Practice the Alexander Technique, Yoga or Pilates** – but take it gently as with any new form of exercise. Anything that stretches and strengthens the spine is to be encouraged
- 3 **Start at the feet.** Many back problems start at the feet. Wear flat, well fitting shoes with cushioned soles. Simple ankle rotations can prevent many foot/back problems
- 4 **Avoid sudden movements.** Where possible try and plan your movement in your mind before moving
- 5 **Try to reduce stress, anxiety and tension in your daily life.** Relaxation techniques like deep breathing can keep you more relaxed and less prone to back pain
- 6 **Get expert help.** Consult a professional as to establish a positive diagnosis so self treatment can be employed without worry
- 7 **Acupuncture** - an age old technique that has been scientifically proven to be one of the best forms of natural pain relief
- 8 **Massage** - helps to stimulate the circulation of blood which helps keep the muscles supple and mobile
- 9 **Exercise** - keeps the back strong and less likely to give problems. Focus on your core muscles/core strength. Swiss /exercise balls are good for this
- 10 **Herbal remedies** - Devils Claw has been traditionally used to help relieve general aches and pains in the muscles and joints including back pain



Q&A^{*} with Garry Trainer



- Q** I pulled something in my back about 6 months ago, but it's started to hurt again over the past 4 days. During the day I feel I can just about cope with the pain but when I try and sleep I just can't seem to get in the right position. Also, when I get up in the morning I can barely move and everything seems to be seized up. What do you think I should do?
- A** Any pain that does not seem to be subsiding after a few days should be referred to a professional to rule out any underlying "nasties". Pain that is worse in the morning and eases with movement is usually muscular, but one must investigate why the muscle has gone into this state as muscles often come into play as a protective function to protect other structures like nerves and discs.
- Q** I'm 55 and suffer from moderate back pain from time to time. Usually I take ibuprofen to help kill the pain but recently they have given me an upset stomach. Is there anything else I could try?
- A** You should speak to your pharmacist about alternative over the counter medication. They may recommend an alternative such as paracetamol or an herbal alternative such as Devil's Claw'.
- Q** I recently had an accident at work involving slipping over on a wet floor. Basically I landed with a real thud on my tail bone. Now, 6 weeks later, I'm still in tremendous pain and have not been able to return to work. Do you think my only hope now is surgery?
- A** You should see your GP. He or she may recommend a MRI scan to see what damage has been done and then advise you as to the right treatment for whatever injury has occurred.

* These are fictitious case studies. If you have similar symptoms you should always seek advice from your own doctor in the first instance.

What is Osteopathy?

Osteopathic manipulation can provide pain reduction, an improvement in activity levels in lower back pain sufferers and high levels of patient satisfaction. Over 7 million osteopathic treatments are carried out in the UK each year, most of them privately funded. Osteopaths are providing over 850,000 more consultations a year since 1997 and over 1.7 million more than in 1994. Whilst the majority of patients are self-referred there has been a marked increase of referrals from or with the knowledge of GPs and Consultants; up from 22% to 26%. A recent survey showed that 95% of patients believe that the NHS should support osteopathic treatment.

Source: GOsC Snapshot Survey and Public Awareness Surveys, November 2001 and 2007.

“Testimonial”



Sarah is a 28 year old marketing manager from Sussex

Sarah has suffered with back pain on and off for about four years. Before experiencing back problems, Sarah was a keen runner and to have this passion for fitness stripped away left her not only in pain but also disappointed and frustrated.

Desperately searching for an alternative, Sarah came across FlexiHerb®

“Since taking FlexiHerb® to relieve my back pain, I have been able to get back to regular life without the aid of painkillers. I have also returned to running and am once again enjoying a fully active lifestyle”.

This is Sarah's personal experience; the benefits of this product have not been scientifically proven.

Aching Back? Joint Pain?



FlexiHerb® is the first registered Devil's Claw herbal medicine used to relieve backache, rheumatic or muscular pain and general aches and pains in the muscles and joints made from natural herbs

- ✓ Used as a natural herbal pain reliever
- ✓ Contains 600mg high strength Devil's Claw root extract
- ✓ Convenient 1-2 tablets twice daily

FlexiHerb® is available at major pharmacies nationwide and retails at £9.99 for 40 tablets.

For more information on FlexiHerb® go to www.flexiherb.co.uk or call **01628 401980** (normal office hours) or Lo-call **0844 443 2006** (evenings and weekends)

FlexiHerb® - traditionally used to relieve Backache and Joint Pain

FlexiHerb® is a traditional herbal medicinal product used for the relief of backache, rheumatic or muscular pain, and general aches and pains in the muscles and joints, exclusively based upon long-standing use as a traditional remedy. Always read the label.