

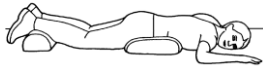
## Back Pain Advice

Most people experience back pain at sometime in their lives. Your spine is a very strong structure. Its strength and flexibility comes from its bones and tough discs which are protected and supported by strong ligaments and muscles. If any of these parts are not working as they should this can cause strain leading to pain. Most back pain is not due to any serious disease. Long term damage is uncommon.

Backs like movement, without this they become stiff and painful. The sooner you can return to normal activities, the less likely you are to develop long standing back pain.

### Initial actions are essential,

- Resting for more than a couple of days is rarely helpful and may make your problems worse.
- Applying a hot or cold pack can help relax your back muscles and help reduce pain
- Taking regular painkillers as directed will help to control your pain and enable you to start and keep moving.
- Make time for periods of rest and relaxation during the day. Some helpful resting positions for your back are shown below.



- Early movements may not be easy and may be uncomfortable at first but try to change your position regularly, avoiding positions which aggravate your pain.



- Avoid sitting for long periods, no longer than 10 minutes in 1 Hour. When sitting use an upright chair with a rolled up towel in the lower back.

**Warning signs** – these symptoms are very rare, but if you do develop any of them seek medical advice immediately.

- ***Difficulty passing or controlling urine***
- ***Numbness around your back passage or genitals***
- ***Numbness, Pins and needles or weakness in both legs***
- ***Unsteadiness on your feet.***

### Acute Back Pain Exercises

On starting exercises some increase in pain is common, as are new aches and pains in different places. If you are exercising correctly your pain may move towards the middle of your back and away from your legs. It is not uncommon for your back pain to increase as your leg pain eases.

Aim to do some exercises every 1-2 hours. **Only progress onto the next exercise if your pain is getting better or staying the same.** If any of the exercises increase your leg pain or the pain moves further down your leg then stop and discuss this with your therapist.

**Exercise 1** - Lay face down, for 5-10 minutes, if you are unable to do so without increasing your pain try placing a pillow under your stomach.



**Exercise 2** - Lying on your back with knees together and bent.  
Slowly roll your knees from side to side keeping your upper trunk still.

Repeat 5-10 times to each side

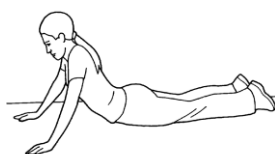


**Exercise 3** – Lying face down, leaning on your elbows/forearms.



Hold for up to 30 seconds, then rest for 30 Seconds. Repeat between 5-10 times.

**Exercise 4** – Lying face down with both your hands at shoulder height.  
Straighten your elbows and lift your upper body as far up as you can, try to keep your hips in contact with the floor. Keep your pelvis and legs relaxed.



Repeat 5-10 times