

Relieving Back Pain



Back pain is a common problem. You can strain back muscles by lifting too much weight. Or just by moving the wrong way. Back strain can be uncomfortable or even painful. And it can take weeks or months to get better. Try these tips to help yourself feel better. They can also help prevent back strains.

Ice

Ice eases muscle pain and swelling. It helps most during the first 24 to 48 hours after an injury.

- Wrap an ice pack or a bag of frozen peas in a thin towel. Never put ice directly on your skin.
- Place the ice where your back hurts the most.
- Don't ice for more than 20 minutes at a time.
- You can use ice several times a day.



Medicines

Over-the-counter pain relievers include acetaminophen and anti-inflammatory medicines. These include aspirin, naproxen, and ibuprofen. They can help ease discomfort. Some also ease swelling.

- Tell your healthcare provider about any medicines you are already taking.
- Take medicines only as directed.
- Never give aspirin to children or teens without first talking with your child's healthcare provider.

Manipulation and massage

Having spinal manipulation by an osteopathic doctor or chiropractor may be helpful. Getting a massage or acupuncture also may help. Physical therapy can set up an exercise program that works to ease your pain. It's also helps prevent further injuries.

Heat

After the first 48 hours, heat can relax sore muscles and improve blood flow.

- Try a warm bath or shower. Or use a heating pad set on low. To prevent a burn, keep a cloth between you and the heating pad.
- Don't use a heating pad for more than 15 minutes at a time. Never sleep on a heating pad. This can cause burns if you have diabetes or other conditions that affect how well you can sense heat.

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