

# BACK PAIN

## TREATMENT GUIDE FOR LOW BACK PAIN



In most cases, low back pain is temporary and will go away on its own. However, treatment may be necessary for pain that is worsening or interfering in daily life.

### A correct diagnosis

Before beginning any treatment plan, it is important to have back pain diagnosed by a doctor or specialist. This will rule out any other medical conditions that might be causing the pain and ensure that the right course of treatment is followed.

Many options may be available and the decision is not always easy. Moreover, the short or long-term implications of certain treatments can be surprising. For this reason, a complete understanding of the implications of every procedure involved is essential.

### Questions to discuss with your doctor

#### Time commitment

- How much time out of my daily life will this treatment involve?
- Do I need to take any time off work?
- Is there any preparation or recovery time involved?

#### Pain, side effects and risks

- How much pain or discomfort does this treatment usually cause (during both the procedure and the recovery process)?
- What side effects are commonly associated with this treatment?
- Are there any health risks or possible complications involved?

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## Physical limitations

- Do I have any other medical conditions (previous or existing) or am I taking any medications that might be incompatible with this treatment?
- Will this treatment make me drowsy, tired or unable to drive or operate machinery?
- Will this treatment allow me to continue my daily life and hobbies? Will I need to make any adjustments?
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- Will I be able to continue playing my favorite sports?
- Will this treatment affect my sexual life?

## Work limitations

- Will I need to take time off work before, after or during this treatment?
- Will this treatment make it difficult for me to do my work normally? Will I need to work from home, with modified hours, or using special equipment?

## Lifestyle implications

- How will this treatment impact my general quality of life?
- Do I need to give up anything to have this treatment? (For example, most surgeries require giving up smoking for at least six months beforehand. Alcohol might also be incompatible with some medications)
- Does this treatment involve any dietary changes?
- Is this treatment easy to follow and maintain? Do I need any help from others (family, friends, a caregiver) in order to follow this treatment?

## Preparedness

- Have I tried other options? (Especially in the case of surgery, which might only be available once other options have been attempted)?
- Have I allowed enough time? (Some surgeries require sufficient time to pass before they can be performed).

## Insurance coverage

- Is this cost of this treatment covered by my insurance?

## Questions about your diagnosis?

### Unsure which treatment is right for you?

Did you know you have access to a free, independent and confidential decision support service?

Discuss your concerns and have your case reviewed by a specialist in your condition.

The decision is yours. And we're with you all the way.

