

### What causes back pain?

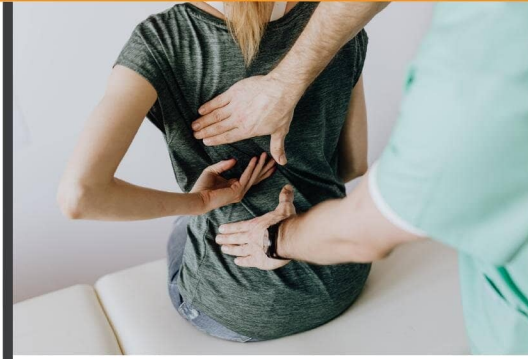
There are a number of reasons why someone may experience back pain.

Back pain may begin suddenly, as a result of a **specific incident** such as lifting something heavy or bending awkwardly.

However, it can also **develop gradually** as a result of:

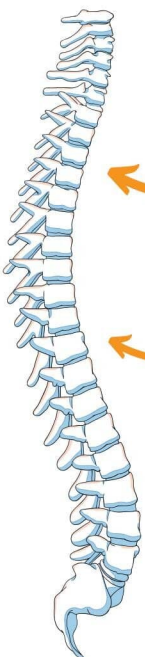
- Poor posture when sitting or standing.
- Lifestyle factors such as being in an uncomfortable working position for long periods of time.
- Wear and tear over time.
- Tension in the back muscles due to worry and stress delaying recovery of existing pain or injury.

There may also be **no obvious reason** why back pain develops!



### Most back pain is 'simple' or 'mechanical' back pain.

This means that the pain is not related to any serious underlying condition. Often there are multiple tissues involved in simple back pain, including muscles, joints, nerves and ligaments.



The spine is one of the strongest parts of the body - it is surprisingly difficult to damage! It is made up of:

← Solid blocks of bone called vertebra.

← Spongy pads, or discs, which act as shock absorbers and maintain flexibility. These are very strong and made of cartilage. They can narrow with age causing stiffness, and making movement difficult.

The spine is then reinforced by strong ligaments and surrounded by powerful muscles.

65% of people in the UK experience back or neck pain each month.

45% of people in the UK report that sitting still for long periods of time triggers their pain.

1 in 5 people in the UK blame their jobs as a key trigger of their pain.



# How to cope with back pain?



Try not to rest for more than a day or two.

Inflammation and muscle spasm can be very painful, so you may need to take it easy for a couple of days.

## It is best to try and keep moving!

Your back is designed for movement. It helps to lubricate the joints, so the sooner you get back to normal activity, the sooner your back will feel easier.

You can help your recovery through:

### Exercises & Stretching

Ask your chiropractor for the right exercises for you.

### Foam Rolling

If you are already used to foam rollers, this can help.

## It is important to seek help if your back pain does not improve.

### Early action will mean faster recovery.

Chiropractors are **highly trained** in finding the cause of, and managing, back pain, trapped nerves, disc bulges and muscle strains. When you come to a chiropractic appointment, it will be structured as follows:

- 1. Full Assessment:** To allow a precise diagnosis, the chiropractor will take details about your condition, current health and medical history, as well as performing a physical examination. If necessary, you may be referred for other tests, such as X-rays, MRI scans or blood tests of your nerves, muscles and joints.
- 2. Clear Explanation:** You will be informed of what is wrong, what can be done and what to expect from your sessions.
- 3. Pain Management & Treatment:** Chiropractors are best known for manual spinal manipulation, where they use their hands to free stiff or restricted joints, or mobilisation, which is the gradual moving of joints. However, they may also use acupuncture, soft tissue work (massage), and stretching rehabilitation exercises. Your chiropractor may also offer lifestyle advice to help recovery and to prevent repeated episodes of back pain.



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About 50% of people who have an episode of back pain will have another episode within a couple of years.

This doesn't necessarily mean that it is serious! Between episodes most people return to normal activities within two or three weeks, with few remaining symptoms

## Occasionally, back pain can be more serious.

Nerves can become **irritated, compressed or trapped** by disc bulges or wear and tear.

This nerve pain can lead to pain spreading down the leg, which is commonly referred to as **sciatica**.

This can be accompanied by pins and needles, tingling, numbness and weakness in all or part of the leg and foot.

Chiropractors can diagnose this and recommend appropriate treatment.