

Standing in extension

In a standing position, place your hands on your hips. Gently arch your spine backwards, keeping your legs straight.

Repeat – little and often.



Where can I get more information?

NHS Choices advice about back pain

www.nhs.uk/conditions/back-pain

British Association of Spine Surgeons

www.spinesurgeons.ac.uk

British Pain Society

www.britishpainsociety.org

Healthy activities in your area:

Lambeth: www.lambeth.gov.uk

Southwark: www.southwark.gov.uk

Bromley: www.bromleyhealthcare.org.uk

Useful contacts

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS.

t: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas'

t: 020 7188 8803 at Guy's

e: pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Language support services

t: 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

Managing your back pain

Information for patients



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Managing your back pain successfully – tips to help

Back pain is very common, with most of us likely to experience at least one bout in our lifetime. Though it can be painful, it is rarely serious, and for most people it settles over the course of a few weeks.

Xrays and scans are not recommended for the majority of people with back pain.

This leaflet gives you some suggestions that others with back pain have found helpful. Following these suggestions may help you recover and return to your usual activities:

Stay active

It is best to keep gently active and continue going to work if you have an episode of back pain. Though some things that you do will be painful, moving gently will not damage your back.

Take your pain medication

Some people are reluctant to take painkillers as they are worried about masking their pain and causing further harm to their back. However, pain can result in us tensing up and not moving normally. It is therefore important to take your



medicines regularly in order to stay active and return to normal life.

Use hot and cold packs

Using a hot water bottle or an ice pack may help ease pain and promote muscle relaxation.

Do some exercise

General exercise helps keep us moving and will assist your recovery. No particular form of exercise has been shown to be better than another in helping low back pain, so choose something that you enjoy and do it regularly, building up slowly.



The next page shows a few exercises that you can do at home. They may help you to manage your pain and keep you moving.

Side bends



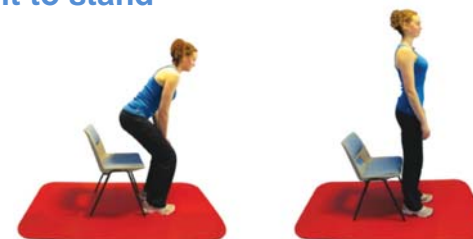
Stand upright and slowly bend to one side, sliding your hand down the side of your leg. Feel a stretch on the opposite side of your body. Return to the centre and do the same to the other side. **Repeat little and often.**

Knee rolls



Lie on your back with your knees bent. Slowly rotate your knees first to one side and then the other. **Repeat little and often.**

Sit to stand



Sit on a chair. Lean forward from your hips, bringing your body weight forward over your knees. Push to stand using your leg and bottom muscles. To sit back down, move your bottom backwards and use your leg muscles to lower yourself. **Repeat little and often.**