

Back Pain Management Plan

Use this sheet along side the video lesson so by the end you have a written plan of action. Enjoy.

1. Posture

Bad postures put extra strain though your back. You may be doing things that you don't even realise are having an impact. Trying to maintain a nice neutral spine is a great place to start.

Set a timer to move regularly - even a great posture can become a problem after a while.

Can you do something now to instantly improve your posture? What else could you do to improve your posture?

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2. Strength

Improve strength of your core muscles to stabilise and support your back during the day. Get good advice on how to do this as many people I see think they have a strong core and have been doing core exercises but unfortunately they have been engaging other muscles instead. It is easily done.

What are you going to do to improve your core? Do you need to look into this more?

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3. Stretching

Stretching promotes movement in the back and relieves tension in the muscles both of which will help your back to function better and you to move out of pain.

Try some gentle stretches, listen to your back it will tell you what it likes. Do these at least once a day if your back likes it you could do them 2 or 3 times.

Caution - when your back is sore stretching can irritate it more. Listen to your back and only stretch if it feels good. Try again when your back is happier as it will help

Write down 3 stretches your back likes and do them regularly.

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4. Exercise

Regular low/moderate exercise can help you to maintain a healthy back. Sometimes when your back is sore exercise such as walking will make it worse. In which case take it easy, reduce your walking in the short term then build it back in as you are able. But for others exercise will really help.

Is your back happier on days when you are active or more sedentary?

Tune in to this and use it to help. If your back is happier after a walk then do this each day. Do you feel better after a swim or a night dancing with your friends?

What are you going to do short term and long term to help your back pain with exercise?

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5. Heat or Ice

Heat can help to relieve pain and muscle tension and promote relaxation. How does your back feel after a hot bath? Better? If so use heat regularly there are many options available wheat bag, hot water bottle, heat patches.

If you have injured your back then ice can be a better option give it a try but most backs prefer heat.

Directions for use - 15 - 20 mins, don't put directly onto skin, ensure full sensations and good circulation. Use regularly during the day.

Does your back like heat or ice? If yes - how will you fit this regularly into your day?

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6. Medication

Medication can be useful, especially in the short term to help you get moving. If you have already tried some and it didn't help then don't think all medication will not help. Different drugs work for different people so try something help and get expert guidance.

Chat to your Dr or Pharmacist for advice on a suitable option for you.

Have you tried medication? Do you think it might help? If so book an appointment or put a time in your diary to go to the pharmacy/chemist.

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7. Massage

Massage reduces muscle tension, increases circulation and aids relaxation. If your back likes heat then it will probably like massage.

Don't underestimate the benefit of 2 minutes of self massage. You don't have to pay for a professional massage but if you have the option it may be beneficial. Opt for something gentle.

Try some self massage now! Has it helped? If so then think about how you will fit this into your day. And remember this next time it feels sore.

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8. Alignment

What's your alignment like? It's difficult to tell unless you properly assess your biomechanics. Do your feet point forwards or turn out, are they flat? Does your knee move inwards when you are walking? Is your pelvis well aligned or tilted? Is your weight equal through both legs? These points and more can influence the stresses and strains your back will face. Identifying them and then correction them will help your back to function better and reduce the strain going through it. It will also prevent pain recurring.

Most people I see in clinic have a few things that need addressing. Do you think any of these could be having an impacting on your back?

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9. Weight Management

Maintaining a healthy weight can be beneficial to a good functioning back. When you are in pain it can be difficult to address but it might be beneficial. Once you are more active and engaging in regular activity this will help with your weight. See link at the end for support.

If this is a problem for you what could you do to start moving in the right direction?

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10. Ergonomics

How your home and work space are set up can have an impact on how your back functions. Where do you sit for the majority of the time? Is this chair supportive, are you twisted when you are working or watching tv? Can you do something to change this, try some different chairs in the house use cushions for support.

If you work from home then have a look at the work station assessment. Link at the end.

Think about when you have pain this can give you clues as to what to look at. Aching before bed after watching tv? Hurting after you have been washing up or sitting at the sewing machine. Focus on your posture during these aggravating activities is a great place to start.

What can I change or investigate further to help?

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11. Mental Health

Mental stresses have a big impact of our physical health. From the way we feel pain to our bodies abilities to heal. You may not class yourself as having a mental health problem but what about every day stresses. Are you particularly busy time at work, studying, dealing with a poorly relative or teenage children - juggling too many things?

Ask for help could someone else do something to lighten the load? - I know Im terrible at that. Try and make time everyday to do something you enjoy - listen to music, take a bath read a book - priorities you for a change.

There is a great link at the end for support with this. You don't need to struggle alone.

Think about your mental health and life at the moment are things more hectic than you would like? If so what could you do to give yourself more breathing space and help your physical health to improve.

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12. Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy can help you to learn more about your back its likes and dislikes and teach you how to better manage these. We are also able to look at your back and the rest of your body and help to regain better function with postural advice and exercises.

At Home Physio - Expert in your house. I do this all the time in clinic so I know this approach really works. This is why I developed the Pain Free Back Program so you can access the expert help you need at home. Heres what you can expect;

- Learn about your back, how it functions, what we need to do to have at great functioning spine, develop a management plan.
- Assess your back, biomechanics, sitting and standing postures so you know where your problem areas are.
- We then tackle these problem areas with a complete exercise program bespoke to your needs. Incorporating stretching, core exercises and exercises to help correct poor posture and issues with your biomechanics. Working towards a stronger back and better posture.
- This complete program covers all this and more in easy to watch video lessons just like this one. So you have everything you need to achieve your Pain Free Back.

Hands on physiotherapy can be useful for some people. Link at end on how to access a Chartered Physiotherapist.

Do you need some expert help and support to move forwards with your back?

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ACTION PLAN - LESS TALK, MORE ACTION

What are you going to do to take action? Let's make a plan. Both short and long term.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

Choose AT LEAST 1 of these to action immediately, put timings in for when you will action the rest.

Please don't underestimate the importance of just doing 1 thing. Doing these in isolation make it less likely for you to move out of pain so try and action all that apply to you for quicker, better and more long term results.

WELL DONE - You have just taken your first steps towards a PAIN FREE BACK...

... KEEP GOING,

Take care, Helen

Useful links -

Pain Free Back Program - <https://helen-manders-s-school.teachable.com/p/pain-free-back>

Work station assessment HSE - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.pdf>

NHS weight loss - <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight/>

CSP find a physio - <https://www.csp.org.uk/public-patient/find-physiotherapist/find-physio>

Mental health support - Top tips to improve your mental wellbeing - <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing/>