

Top 10 tips for back pain

1. Exercise your back regularly – walking, swimming (especially back stroke) and using exercise bikes are all excellent to strengthen your back muscles but anything that you enjoy and helps you keep active will be beneficial
2. Keep active and moving even when you have pain. Gentle walking and stretching will prevent stiffness. Also try to avoid long periods of bed rest as this is counterproductive.
3. Always lift and carry objects close to your body, bend your knees and your hips not your back and never twist and bend at the same time
4. Try to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle as this will help prevent back pain. Quit smoking as it increases your chances of developing back pain
5. Use painkillers when pain occurs to allow you to carry on being active. If pain is persistent see your GP as they may be able to prescribe stronger painkillers or investigate further.
6. Consider your work environment. If you work in an office look at your workspace and ways to adapt it to help you manage your back pain. If your work is more manual in nature try to be aware of and work according to health and safety procedures such as manual handling or loading procedures.
7. Try to carry items in a rucksack and avoid carrying single sling bags.
8. Always try to maintain good posture. Avoid slumping in your chair, hunching over your desk and walking around with your shoulders hunched up.
9. Always use a chair with a back rest and sit with your feet flat on the floor or on a footrest. Don't forget to change your sitting position every few minutes
10. If you do suffer from back pain caused or made worse by being at work, talk to your employer or HR department. They may be able to help you come up with adaptations to your work environment, patterns and activities in order to help you better manage your back pain.

