



BACK PAIN

You can prevent low back pain

Low back pain is a very common problem. Although painful, most low back injuries are only minor. Some back pain comes from hard work or normal aging.

Sadly, your back cannot stop working and take a break. Yet, if you ignore early warning sign of back pain, it may get worse. Report any severe or lasting back pain to your doctor.

What causes back pain?

- Poor posture when lifting and bending
- The way you lift or bend can over stretch or tear back muscles and the tissue that binds bones to bones
- Extra pounds can strain your back
- Tension, being tired, worry

Relief for minor back pain:

- Bed rest, 1 – 2 days at most.
- Apply ice with a cold pack or ice wrapped in a towel right after injury. Ice again a few times a day for up to 20 minutes a time.
- Apply heat with a heating pad or warm bath 2 – 3 days after injury to relax muscles
- Take over the counter pain medicine if needed



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BACK PAIN: You can prevent low back pain

You can prevent back injuries!

- Use good posture when lifting and bending
- Build strong and flexible muscles in your back, tummy and hip to support your back

Check with your doctor before starting new exercises.

Here are some hints on how to prevent low back pain:

Sitting



Correct

Incorrect

Sit in chairs low enough to place both feet on the floor with knees higher than your hip. Don't slump. Avoid slouching forward and arching your back. If you must sit for a long period of time, take frequent breaks to stand up and walk around.

Driving

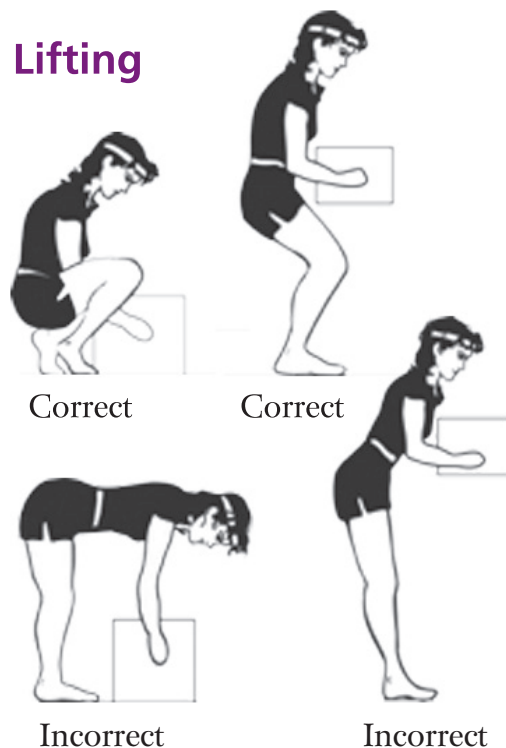


Correct

Incorrect

Don't drive far back from the wheel. Move your car seat forward to keep knees bent and higher than your hips. Stretching for the pedals and wheel increases low back curve and strain. Use a rolled up towel or pillow to support the lower part of your back.

Lifting



Correct

Correct

Incorrect

Incorrect

When picking up objects, bend with your knees, not your waist. Do not bend with your legs straight or twist while lifting. Lift objects only chest high and hold objects close to your body. Get help to move very heavy objects.

Sleeping



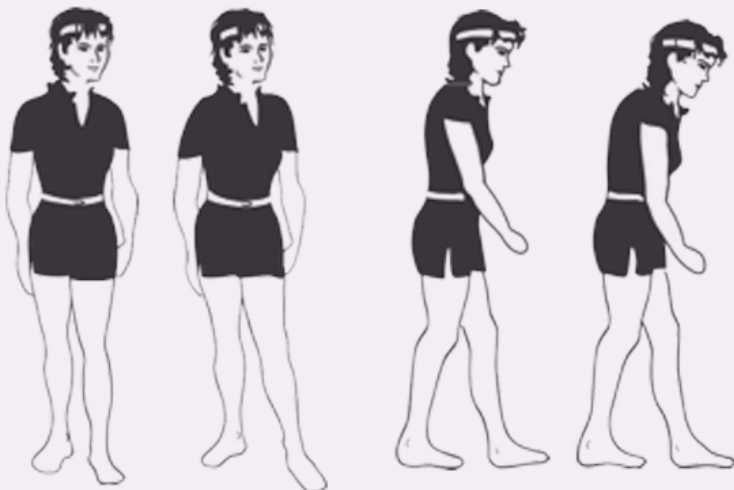
Correct



Incorrect

A firm mattress is good for your back. Don't sleep on a soft, sagging mattress or sofa. Sleep on your side with knees bent, or on your back with a pillow under your knees to keep them bent.

Standing & Walking



Correct

Incorrect

Correct

Incorrect

Walk with good posture. Keep your head high, chin tucked, pelvis forward, and toes straight ahead. Don't stand in one position too long. Try standing with one foot elevated on a box or stool. Avoid wearing high-heeled shoes for too long.

You don't have to do this alone!

To find out more about back pain call Alliance Health Programs at **510-747-4577**.

Toll-Free: 1-877-932-2738;
CRS/TTY: 711 or 1-800-735-2929;
8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday.

www.alamedaalliance.org

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