

How to relieve back pain without drugs

Occasional back pain is common. Not all types of back pain can or should be treated without medication and I often get asked “what to do for self-help to relieve back pain?” Here’s my general advice. There are several things you can do to strengthen your back and relieve back pain without the use of drugs.

1 Apply heat. Heat is commonly recommended for alleviating back pain. Heat will help your muscles relax, which can relieve tension and spasms. If your pain is chronic, or not the result of injury, heat is more likely to help. Use a hot water bottle or heating pad to apply dry heat. A hot shower or bath may also provide relief for some back pain. You may also find a sauna or hot tub helpful.

2 Use a cold pack. This sounds uncomfortable, however using a cold pack is usually more helpful when inflammation is involved, such as with arthritis-related back pain. A bag of frozen veggies can act as a cold pack in a pinch. Wrap the ice in a tea towel otherwise it could feel unpleasant at first.

3 Improve your posture. Slouching and standing improperly can increase the pressure on your back and cause pain. Improving your posture can relieve back pressure. It can also help prevent recurrence of back pain. Strengthening your core muscles will help improve your posture. These muscles connect to your spine and pelvis and help hold your body up. Pay attention to how you sit and stand throughout the day. Your shoulders should be down and back, not slumped forward. Your head should be at a level position, not bent forward or down. It may feel a little awkward to correct your posture at first, but with a little vigilance, you may begin to feel better.



4 Change your mattress. If other self-care tactics haven't worked, your mattress could be contributing to your back pain. Changing your mattress may help relieve back pain, especially if your mattress is saggy or unsupportive. You can also use pillows and cushions to improve your sleeping position. If you sleep on your back, put a pillow beneath your knees to offer support. If you sleep on your side, put a pillow between your knees to maintain a neutral spine position. Try to avoid sleeping on your stomach. It can twist and put tension on back muscles and neck.

If you require any further information please call me or email, Jo Sunner at Pulse Practice (next to the Bourne post office) on 01778 426000 or email: josunner@aol.com.

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