

## **Low Back Pain**

Incorrect posture or accidental injury, together with lack of exercise, may lead to low back pain. Nearly everyone has low back pain sometime, and it occurs most often between 30-40 years old.

The most common cause of low back pain is minor sprain injury of the muscle and tendon, and it will usually heal without any treatment. However, low back pain is also a warning from our body, reminding us to take good care of our back and prevent further deterioration of the condition.

**Signs and symptoms of severe low back pain** (if patient suffered from the following conditions, they should consult their doctor immediately)

The back pain persists or even increases in severity

The back pain extends to the hip, leg or foot region

Patient suffers from back pain and fever, or other symptoms

There is difficulty in controlling urination or defecation, such as incontinence

There is weakness in the lower limb, decrease in lower limb sensation or numbness

### **Points to note after discharging home**

Patients suffering from low back pain should take the medicine as prescribed. They should have adequate rest at home, and pay attention to the following issues:

During the first 1-2 days after injury, you must have adequate resting. Afterwards, you can consider using hot pad to relieve the muscle spasm

You should lie supine during resting, and you can consider using a mattress that is firm or put a wooden board under the mattress

You should follow the doctor's advice and take the medicine regularly

Do not lift heavy objects or operate heavy machinery

You should be patient, and increase the level of activity slowly to prevent injury again. The whole recovery period may take several weeks or even months

If necessary, you may be referred to a physiotherapist for further management

After recovery from the low back pain, correct and appropriate exercise can strengthen the back muscles and prevent injury again

## **People prone to suffer from low back pain**

People who need to bend down or lift heavy objects during their work

People who need to sit for a long period of time during their work in a poorly designed environment

People who usually sit or stand in an incorrect posture

During pregnancy, the change in hormonal level and the weight of the fetus will increase the burden of the mother's spine causing injury. After delivery, the mother is also prone to back injury because she always needs to carry the baby and doing other heavy work

## **Prevention of low back pain**

In daily living or at work, try to avoid incorrect posture when lifting heavy objects

Maintain correct standing and sitting posture

When lifting heavy objects, you should bend your knees but not your back

If you need to sit for a long period of time, you should use an appropriate chair to support your back and thigh, and you may also consider using a footrest

If you need to lift heavy objects, try to hold it close to your body

You need to have regular and appropriate exercise

You need to keep your back straight most of the time including walking, standing, sitting, squatting, and lifting heavy objects

If you need to drive for a prolonged period of time, you are encouraged to walk out from the car and do some light exercise every 90 minutes

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