

The Myths and Realities Of Back Pain



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At some point in their lives, back pain will affect eight out of 10 people. The amount of health care costs for those who experience back pain is well over \$96 million dollars per year. There are many myths associated with how to cope with this very prevalent situation. Here are just some of the myths that you may hear about back pain:

- It is a normal part of aging

- Bed rest is the best cure
- Drugs and/or surgery are the only cure
- Exercise causes back pain

The truth is that activity is often the best “medicine” for back pain. Strengthening both your lower and upper back as well as your core muscles, along with stretching targeted muscles is key. Add in some aerobic exercise, to keep your muscles toned and promote better circulation, and you could be on your way to feeling good again.

An integrated approach to exercise is essential for everyone, especially those experiencing pain. There are a number of key components to the type of exercise you need to keep your back strong and pain free.

Establishing and maintaining proper posture and body alignment will insure that you do not create muscle imbalances. Muscle imbalances may cause other parts of your body to compensate, causing pain, stiffness and loss of motion. The prevalence of poor posture and improper body alignment in today’s society is too often ignored.

Strengthening your core assists in stabilizing your spine, enabling you to maintain correct posture. A strong core also reduces the strain on the lower back. The flexibility and stretching component work to allow your joints to go through their full range of motion, decrease muscle tension and tightness, prevent abnormal force on the joints and decrease your chance of injury.

In order for exercise to help, it must be done correctly. It is essential that the exercises you do are appropriate for your body. Utilizing proper exercise form and employing proper body mechanics will keep you safe.

Engaging in a consistent exercise program, no less than twice a week, is imperative in order to establish a routine and see success. A scientifically based, personalized, integrated exercise program may be just what you need for that aching back. Although moderate physical activity such as brisk walking is safe for most people, health experts suggest that you talk to your doctor before you start any exercise program.



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