

YOUR CARE POLMED

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Manage back pain with exercise therapy



Around 80% of South Africans will experience back pain in their lifetime.



Back pain is also responsible for more absenteeism from work than cancer.

Luckily, once you acknowledge back pain, it can be easy to manage and you can help to prevent further complications.

ACUTE VERSUS CHRONIC BACK PAIN

ACUTE BACK PAIN:

- Pain lasts a few days or weeks.
- Caused by sudden injury.



CHRONIC BACK PAIN:

- Pain lasts for 12 weeks or longer.
- If left unmanaged, can increase risk of depression and affect the immune system.



HOW CAN I MANAGE BACK PAIN?



Painkillers?

Painkillers is a go-to solution for back pain, but they have been linked to addiction, heart disease and depression.



Surgery?

Surgery only becomes an option if back pain persists and constant nerve tingling/burning sensations, weakness in muscle etc. are experienced. Literature shows only just over 50% of spinal surgeries are successful, so readmission is still likely.



Physical therapy?

Conservative exercise-based treatment is a safe and sustainable way to help manage and treat back pain.

Studies have shown that exercise and activity (including work) is an effective way of improving function and reducing pain in lower back injuries. The goal of exercise and activity is to restore strength and endurance, which subsequently helps to improve function and participation in daily activities.

One of the best ways to prevent surgery is to remain as active as possible as this will help to strengthen the muscles and structures in your back.



Exercises that can help strengthen muscles and ease the pressure on your back include:



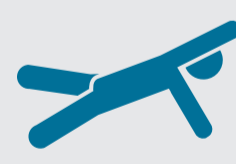
Forearm planks



Tai chi



Yoga



Bird-dog exercises

While exercising is an effective and sustainable way to manage back pain, it's important to consult with a physiotherapist and/or biokineticist to ensure that appropriate exercises are prescribed.

Polmed has a Conservative Back and Neck programme which you may access.

For more information, contact the Polmed Client Service Call Centre on 0860 765 633 and follow the prompts to the Disease Risk Management Programme. Alternatively, send an email to polmedcbrnp@medscheme.co.za.

References

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