

# Pain Solutions

www.sepainandspinecare.com

## Back Pain



### What should I do if I experience back pain?

If you experience back pain that continues or worsens over the course of 2 weeks, you will benefit from an evaluation by a pain specialist. Early intervention is key to heading off long term pain conditions.

If a patient has problems with bowel or bladder control, numbness in the groin or rectal area, or leg weakness they should seek help immediately. These symptoms are a sign of nerve damage and can be irreversible if not treated appropriately.

### What are causes of back pain?

- Overuse, unaccustomed activity, and excessive lifting
- Muscle or ligament strain
- Disc disease, arthritis, congenital spine abnormalities, and tumors
- Spinal stenosis, which is a constriction of the spinal canal, whether congenital or caused by degenerative and/or bulging discs
- Spondylolithesis, which is forward displacement of a vertebra in relation to the vertebra immediately below
- Pregnancy - ligaments, muscles stretch, and body alignment is affected by a growing fetus
- Infections - these are rarely a cause, but bacteria can invade discs, vertebrae or joints

### What are common activities that cause back pain?

For the overwhelming majority of back pain sufferers, the problem usually stems from overuse, an unaccustomed activity, or excessive lifting and twisting. Less frequent

causes include trauma, disc abnormalities (which become more common with age), disc herniations, and disc impingement on a nerve root in the spine.

### What can I do at home?

- Rest and restrict activity
- Use a pillow under your head, between your knees, and under an upper arm when resting on your side.
- Use a pillow under your knees when on your back
- Over-the-counter pain relievers, including non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication such as Ibuprofen® or Tylenol®
- Use cold immediately after an injury, then apply heat

### What are the alternatives to surgery?

There are many non-surgical options available for diagnosing and treating back pain. These include:

- Muscle stimulators
- Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (low-voltage currents to tissues to help decrease pain)
- Nerve blocks
- Epidural injections
- Trigger point injections
- Percutaneous discectomy
- Back exercises  
Strength training
- Wide variety of medications



#### Internet Resources:

[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)  
[www.sepaincare.com](http://www.sepaincare.com)

[www.back.com](http://www.back.com)  
[www.backpain-revealed.org](http://www.backpain-revealed.org)