

## Common causes of Low Back Pain

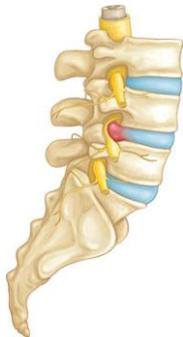
### Muscle strain

Muscle strains are a result of putting muscles under too much stress. This can occur due to poor lifting technique and bad posture.



### Herniated Disc

This involves the jelly like disc between your vertebrae pushing outside of its boundaries. This can press on sensitive spinal nerves, resulting in pain.



### Disc Degeneration

With age, the intervertebral discs compress. This narrows the space between vertebrae where the spinal nerves leave the spine. The bones may then rub on the spinal nerves resulting in pain and stiffness.



## Other signs and symptoms associated with low back pain

- Reduced bowel or bladder control
- Pain and numbness in your legs
- Fever
- Weight loss
- Pain in a recumbent position
- Prolonged morning stiffness
- Visceral pain

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information or if back pain persists, book an appointment to see your Physiotherapist. To do so you may need a referral from your GP.

This pamphlet has been prepared by the Physiotherapy department at Kyabram District Health Services and is intended to contain current information on low back pain from recognized authorities. However, it does not represent official policy and its text should not be construed as excluding other acceptable viewpoints.

The following websites may assist for more information on low back pain:

- <http://www.orthoinfo.org/>
- <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/>
- <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/>
- <http://www.kyhealth.org.au/>



# NON-SPECIFIC LOW BACK PAIN



Consumer Approved

### Kyabram Health

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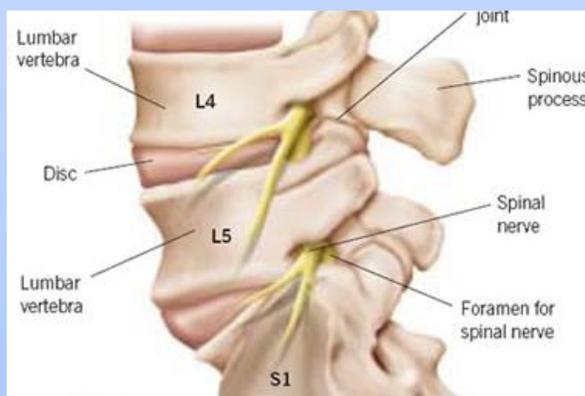


KYABRAM DISTRICT  
HEALTH SERVICE

## *Low Back Pain (LBP)* *is a common ailment that* *affects 84% of the world's* *population at least once* *in their life*

### WHAT PARTS OF THE SPINE CAN BE AFFECTED?

- *Vertebrae*
- *Intervertebral Disc*
- *Muscles and ligaments*
- *Spinal cord and nerves*



## Managing Low Back Pain

### Standing Posture

Stand as tall as possible, with head up, shoulders relaxed and chest out. Ensure you are relaxed and balanced.

### Sitting Posture

Don't sit for too long! Be sure to keep moving, get up at least every 20 minutes. A sitting position with a neutral spine, hips and knees at 90 degrees and head up will avoid provoking back pain. Ensure you have appropriate back support which can be achieved by placing a roll or towel behind your back arch. This can also assist driving.

### Work

It's ok to say no! Don't take on tasks that put you at risk of injury, ask for help when necessary. For office jobs ensure correct sitting posture is used. There are many office workouts readily available online.

### Sleeping

Although movement and activity is vital for back pain, quality rest is important. Good sleeping position allows your muscles to rest and recover. A supportive mattress and pillow are needed to allow for a natural and comfortable position. Try lying on your back with your knees bent (crook lying) or with a pillow under your low back. On your side, lay with a pillow between your knees, these positions may help relieve pain.

### Lifting

With feet shoulder width apart, bend at your hips and knees while maintaining a neutral spine. Grip the load firmly and keep it close to your body. Avoid twisting with your spine, to turn, use your feet.

### Heat

Placing a heat pack, such as a wheat bag or hot water bottle, over the painful area of your back. This has been proven to aid in pain relief. A warm shower can also help.

### Log roll

This technique is used to make getting out of bed easier.

- 1) Roll onto your side
- 2) Move towards the edge of your bed
- 3) Swing legs off edge of bed while pushing your body up with your arm into a sitting position.

### Massage

Self-massage techniques are an effective form of short term pain relief. Use a spikey massage ball, tennis ball or soft rubber ball for best results. Standing with your back against a wall, place the ball between your back and the wall. Roll the ball gently from side to side over painful areas.

### Diet

Maintaining a healthy and balanced diet is important for both general health and reducing the risk of developing other illness and disease. Poor diet is a key factor in obesity and an increased waist circumference increases the risk of developing low back pain.

### Stretching

Simple stretches can help relieve back pain and increase joint mobility. Try lying on your back with your knees bent and gently rocking your knees from side to side.

### Exercise

Movement is the best medicine. Although pain may tempt you to rest, being active helps reduce muscles stiffness and weakness. The national physical activity guidelines recommend at least 30 minutes of exercise, 5 days per-week for 18-65 year olds.

### Pilates

Pilates is a form of exercise aimed at improving movement control and posture. Pilates involves techniques that improve strength of the muscles that support your spine. Your Physiotherapist can instruct and guide you on how to do these exercises.