

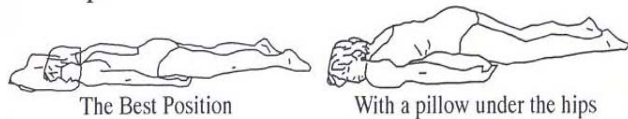
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BACK PAIN AND BACK CARE

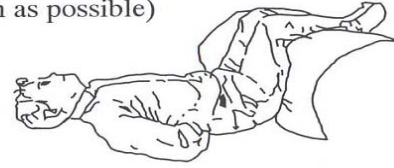
Back pain is very common and often follows a minor injury caused by heavy lifting, an awkward movement etc. This card gives you advice to help you recover from your back pain and gives advice you should follow to reduce the chance of back pain reoccurring in the future.

PAINKILLERS Pain killers work best if they are taken regularly. Do not let the effect wear off too much before taking the next dose if possible, but do not exceed the recommended dose. We can only prescribe pain killing tablets for the first 48 hours. If you need any more after this, you can buy some at the chemist, or contact your GP in the usual way. At the chemist you can buy painkillers such as "Nurofen" or paracetamol which are cheap and work well. Anti inflammatory drugs such as "Nurofen" work best for back pain, but can not be taken if you have certain conditions such as stomach ulcers. Always follow the directions on the package and ask your pharmacist for advice if needed.

SEVERE BACK PAIN To relieve severe lower back pain, for example during the first day or two after injuring your back, you should lie flat as much as possible, face down. If you can't manage this position initially, try placing a small pillow under your hips, but try and manage without it as soon as possible.



If the pain is too bad to manage even in the second position, you can try and get comfortable like this initially (But try and get into the first position above as soon as possible)



SLEEPING

A firm bed is better than a soft bed, it should be firm but not hard. The best position to sleep in is the most comfortable position, which is different for different people. However, you must not sleep propped up with pillows, you must lie flat. If your pain is severe you can also try sleeping in the positions above (but don't stay long in the second position or you will find difficulty in straightening up again!). Try sleeping on your side with a small pillow between your knees, or with a rolled up towel wrapped round your waist (then lie on your side or your back). You can also use these positions for resting, watching TV etc., and this is better than sitting for prolonged periods.

SITTING

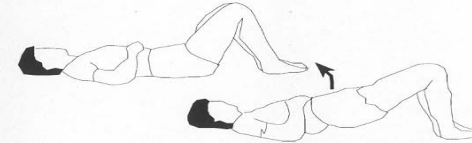
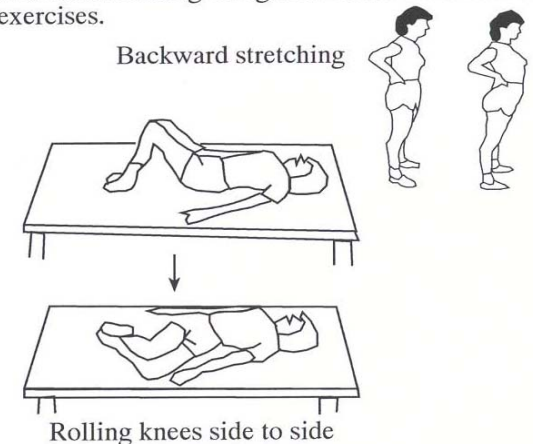
Avoid sitting for prolonged periods if you have a sore back. If you have to sit, for example on a car journey, stop to walk about and stretch occasionally. When sitting place a small rolled up towel or similar object

behind the small of your back (at waist level) to provide support. Car accessory shops also sell supports.



EXERCISES

Getting moving soon after a back injury will help your back to get back to normal more quickly. Usually after 48 hours the pain will start to improve and then you should start on some exercises, and some gentle activities such as swimming and gentle walks. Here are some exercises.



Lifting hips to make a bridge

POSTURE

Maintaining a good posture is always important for a bad back. Avoid slouching and keep your shoulders back.



Bad Posture



Good Posture

LIFTING

In the early stages of a sore back avoid bending forwards at all. When you lift you should always use your legs rather than your back and get in close to the object.



wrong



Correct: Straight Back and bent legs

90% of those suffering from a sore back after an injury recover fully in six weeks, but remember to keep looking after your back. If your back pain is not improving in the first few weeks you should see your GP for further advice.