

Low Back Pain

Myths & Facts

The following information was obtained from:

O'Sullivan PB, Caneiro J, O'Sullivan K, et al Back to basics: 10 facts every person should know about back pain. British Journal of Sports Medicine Published Online First: 31 December 2019.

MYTH

LBP is usually a serious medical condition.

1

FACT

LBP is not a serious life-threatening medical condition.

MYTH

LBP will become persistent and deteriorate in later life.

2

FACT

Most episodes of LBP improve and LBP does not get worse as we age.

MYTH

Persistent LBP is always related to tissue damage.

3

FACT

A negative mindset, fear-avoidance behavior, negative recovery expectations, and poor pain coping behaviors are more strongly associated with persistent pain than is tissue damage.

MYTH

Scans [X rays, MRI's etc.] are always needed to detect the cause of LBP.

4

FACT

Scans do not determine prognosis of the current episode of LBP, the likelihood of future LBP disability, and do not improve LBP clinical outcomes.

MYTH

Pain related to exercise and movement is always a warning that harm is being done to the spine and a signal to stop or modify activity.

5

FACT

Graduated exercise and movement in all directions is safe and healthy for the spine.

MYTH

LBP is caused by poor posture when sitting, standing and lifting.

MYTH

LBP is caused by weak 'core' muscles and having a strong core protects against future LBP.

MYTH

Repeated spinal loading results in 'wear and tear' and tissue damage.

MYTH

Pain flare-ups are a sign of tissue damage and require rest.

MYTH

Treatments such as strong medications, injections and surgery are effective, and necessary, to treat LBP.

FACT

6 Spine posture during sitting, standing and lifting does not predict LBP or its persistence.

FACT

7 A weak core does not cause LBP, and some people with LBP tend to over-tense their 'core' muscles. While it is good to keep the trunk muscles strong, it is also helpful to relax them when they aren't needed.

FACT

8 Spine movement and loading is safe and builds structural resilience when it is graded.

FACT

9 Pain flare-ups are more related to changes in activity, stress and mood rather than structural damage.

FACT

10 Effective care for LBP is relatively cheap and safe. This includes: education that is patient-centered and fosters a positive mindset, and coaching people to optimize their physical and mental health.



Safe, Effective & Affordable Care

The American College of Physicians clinical practice guideline recommends that for acute, subacute, or chronic low back pain, physicians and patients initially utilize spinal manipulation and delay pharmacologic management.

Reference: Qaseem A, et al. for the Clinical Guidelines Committee of the American College of Physicians. Noninvasive Treatments for Acute, Subacute, and Chronic Low Back Pain: A Clinical Practice Guideline From the American College of Physicians. Ann Intern Med. 2017;166(7):514-530.

If you or someone you know suffers from low back pain, follow the expert advice: **stay positive**, **stay active**, and **seek safe** and **affordable** non-drug options including **chiropractic**.