

Low Back Pain Report

Low back pain is one of the most significant health problems. Consider these statistics from the National Institutes of Health (NIH):

- Sixty-five to 80 percent of all people have back pain at some time in their life.
- Back pain is the most frequent cause of activity limitation in people younger than 45 years old.
- One-half of all working Americans admit to having back pain symptoms each year.²
- Back pain is one of the most common reasons for missed work, it is the second most common reason for visits to the doctor's office (upper-respiratory infection is first).
- Most cases of back pain are mechanical. They are not caused by serious conditions, such as inflammatory arthritis, infection, fracture or cancer. This means that gentle, natural health care is the best way to treat most back pain.
- Americans spend at least \$50 billion each year on back pain (not counting costs for missed work and lost productivity).
- Experts estimate that as many as 80% of the population will experience a back problem at least once.

What is the cause of back pain?

The most common cause is mechanical. The back is a complicated structure of bones, joints, ligaments and muscles, and sometimes they do not function together as well as they could. This is why spinal adjusting is often so effective. Back pain can also be caused by injuries like sprained ligaments, strained muscles, ruptured disks, and irritated joints. Often it seems that the simplest of movements—for example, picking up a pen from the floor, can lead to severe back pain. Arthritis, poor posture, obesity, and psychological stress can cause or complicate back pain. Back pain can also directly result from disease of the internal organs, such as kidney stones, kidney infections, blood clots, or bone loss.

Diagnosis is Important:

You need to have your back pain evaluated. Only with a proper exam can you tell if your problem is mechanical or due to more serious causes.

Acupuncture and Back Pain:

There are many natural approaches to low back pain. Research appearing in the Archives of Internal Medicine (2006; 166(4)) looked at the efficacy of acupuncture treatment on low back pain. Nearly 300 subjects suffering from chronic low back pain were divided into three groups. One group received acupuncture treatment (12 sessions over a period of eight weeks). One group received superficial needling at non-acupuncture points. A third group was placed on a waiting list as a control. At the end of treatment, the mean reduction of pain in the acupuncture group was greater than the control group.

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