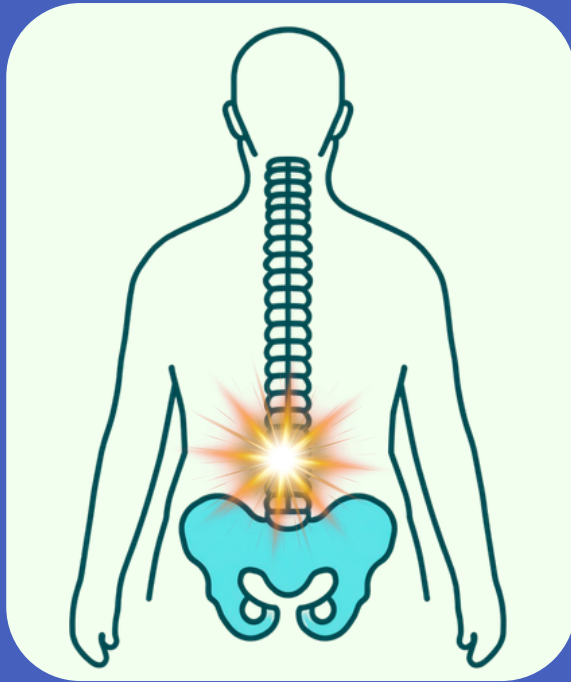




LOWER BACK PAIN

Created by University of Stirling student physiotherapists. General advice only; seek GP/A&E help if concerned.

UNDERSTANDING THE LOWER BACK

What is the Lower Back?

Your lower back is the area between your ribs and your hips. It helps you:

- *Stand upright*
- *Walk*
- *Bend*
- *Twist*
- *Lift*
- *Stay balanced*



Your back is made up of:

- *Bones*
- *Discs*
- *Muscles*
- *Ligaments*
- *Nerves*

These all work together to keep your back strong and help you move.

Your back is designed to be strong. It likes to move.

What Can Cause Lower Back Pain?

Back pain is very common. Many unavoidable everyday habits can influence soreness, like:

- *Doing more than usual*
- *Sitting for long periods*
- *Stress*
- *Poor sleep*
- *Muscle stiffness*
- *Not moving enough*



Most back pain is not caused by serious damage.

Pain ≠ Damage



Pain is your body's warning system, like a smoke alarm. Sometimes it warns of danger, but it can become oversensitive. **Pain does not always mean damage**, and it is often safe to keep moving.

What Can Help Reduce Lower Back Pain?

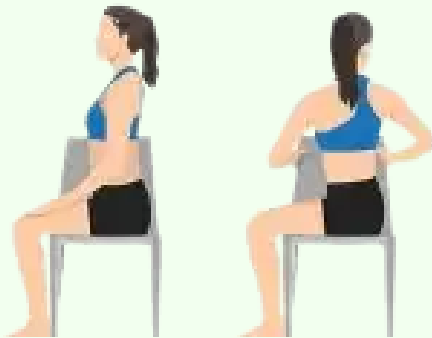
Seated cat cow



Seated knee to chest



Seated spinal twist



X Myth: Exercise will make my back worse.

💡 Fact: Gentle exercise can help reduce pain. * You can progress to a higher level as pain reduces

When Should I Get Medical Help?



Seek **urgent medical help** if you have:

- Numbness or tingling around your genitals, buttocks, or inner thighs.
- Changes in the control of your bladder, or not knowing when your bladder is full.
- Loss of bowel control or non-normal bowel leakage.
- Changes in sexual function or loss of feeling in your genitals.
- If any of these **symptoms are new, getting worse, or happen together**, go to A&E immediately. **More information on these red flags is in the QR Code.**

If you have persistent fever, weight loss, or are becoming very unwell with new back pain reach out to GP or NHS 111.

Remember...

- ☆ Back pain is common.
- ☆ Your back is designed to be strong.
- ☆ Pain does not always mean damage.
- ☆ Keep moving; little and often is good.
- ☆ Ask for help if you are worried.



Extra Information

Produced by University of Stirling student physiotherapists. This information is for educational purposes only and does not replace medical advice. If you are concerned about your symptoms, please contact your GP, ring 111 or attend A&E in an emergency.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-lower-back-pain/>

<https://nhsforthvalley.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ALFL-Referral-Form.pdf?nocache=n0ja7c>