

ALL ABOUT CHRONIC LOW BACK PAIN

80%

of the patient will
suffer from chronic low back
pain once in their lifetime.



**Busting Myths of Chronic
Low Back Pain**



**Correct Postures and Exercises to
Prevent Chronic Low Back Pain**



**Home remedies for Chronic
Low Back Pain**

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CHRONIC LOW BACK PAIN

(CLBP) is an increasingly important health problem.¹

CLBP is a complex disorder with wide-ranging negative consequences that impacts people's lifestyles and self-image.²



However, there are several things you can try to help ease your CLBP.

Read on to know more about CLBP and follow the given tips to speed up your recovery.



WHAT IS

Chronic Low Back Pain?

Chronic Low Back Pain is when you have persistent or fluctuating pain in your lower back for longer than three months.³

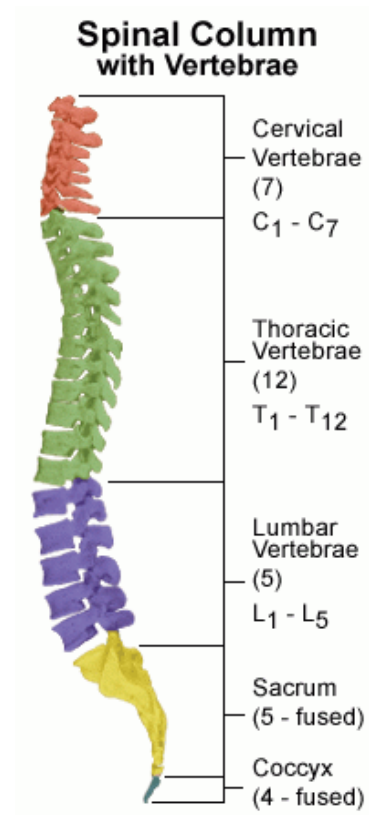


CONNECTION

between your Spine and CLBP

Your lower back has vertebrae of the lumbar spine that allows forward and backward, as well as twisting movements.

The two lowest segments in the lumbar spine, L5-S1 and L4-L5, carry the most weight and have the most movement, making the area prone to injury.⁴



COMMON CAUSES OF CLBP

Here are some common causes of CLBP^{5,6}

Non-specific: No obvious cause



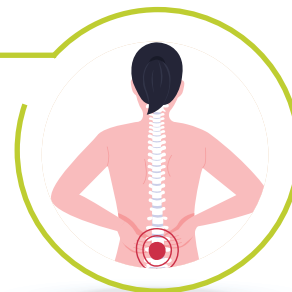
Traumatic Injuries: Sports, car accidents, or a fall injuring tendons, ligaments, or muscle



Vertebral Disk Problems: Herniated or ruptured discs, disc degeneration



Abnormal Curvature of the spine: Scoliosis or kyphosis.



Medical problems: Fibromyalgia (musculoskeletal pain) or rheumatoid arthritis (joint pain)



RISK FACTORS FOR DEVELOPING CLBP

Here are some common causes of CLBP^{5,6}

Age: More common with advancing age and between ages of 30 and 50.



Fitness level: Inactive people with weak back and abdominal muscles may not properly support the spine.



Job-related factors: Jobs requiring heavy lifting, pushing, or pulling, working at a desk.



Weight gain: Being overweight or obese puts stress on the back.



Psychological factors: Anxiety, depression, mood, stress can influence the likelihood of experiencing back pain.



Smoking: It can restrict blood flow and oxygen to the discs, causing them to degenerate faster.



COMMON SYMPTOMS OF CLBP

Most patients that suffer from CLBP experience:⁴



Pain in the lower area of the back



Mobility impairment



Radiating pain in the lower extremities



Difficulty in carrying out daily activities



Difficulty in carrying things in the arms, or bending



Difficulty to maintain a standing, sitting or a lying position, especially in case of radiating pain to the lower extremities

DIAGNOSING CLBP

Diagnosis of CLBP is based on history, symptoms, physical examination and results of diagnostic studies.

When simple treatments are ineffective, your doctor may order imaging studies of the lower back, which may include:⁷

Computed Tomography Scan (CT/CAT scan),
Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)



Selective Nerve Root Block

Discography



X-rays

Myelography



TREATMENT OF CLBP

CLBP is treated by identifying the cause with a stepped care approach, moving from simple low-cost treatments to more aggressive approaches.^{5,6}



Medications prescribed by doctor

Hot or cold packs application



Resuming normal activities to ease pain (bed rest not recommended)

Exercises to strengthen core and back muscles



Psychological support

Manual therapy by Chiropractors, Osteopaths or Physiotherapists

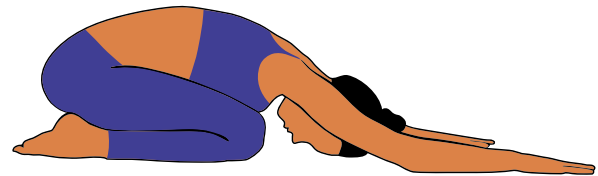


Surgery for back pain (recommended if there's a specific medical reason and when other treatments have not helped.)

EXERCISES FOR CLBP

Simple back exercises and stretches can help reduce back pain. Here are some exercises that will help you relieve **CLBP**.^{5,8}

- » Kneel on the floor, legs spread hip-width apart.
- » Sit back on your heels and drop your head down.
- » Feel the stretch through your spine.
- » Lift your head up and return to the starting position.
- » Repeat 5 times.



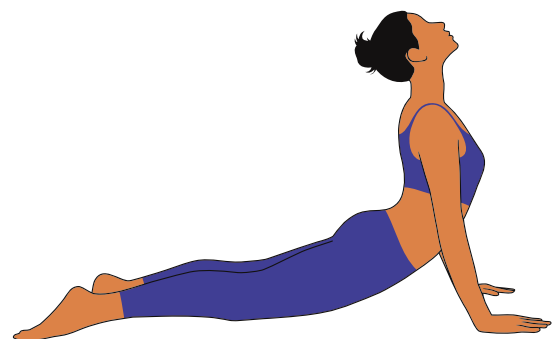
The Kneeling Stretch



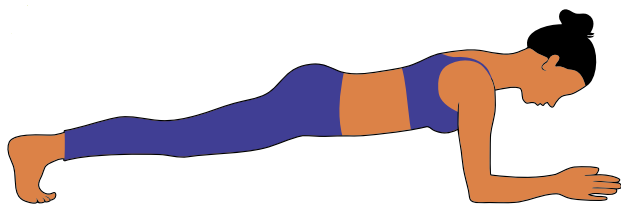
The Knee-to-chest Stretch

- » Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor.
- » Using both hands, pull and hold both knees to your chest until you feel a slight stretch in your lower back.
- » Release your knees and return to the starting position.
- » Repeat 5 times.

- » Lie on your chest with your hips flat.
- » Using both hands, push your hands off lifting your head and shoulders.
- » Arch your back, straighten your elbows to feel the stretch in the lower back area.
- » Return to the starting position.
- » Repeat 5 times.



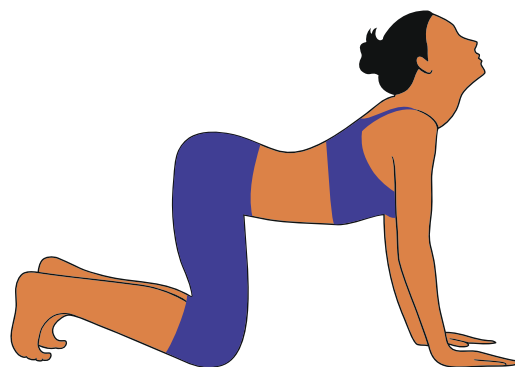
The Back Extension



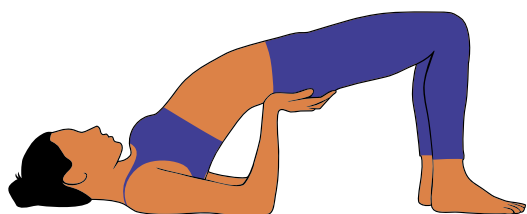
The Plank

- » Get into pushup position with your forearms on the ground.
- » Keeping your elbows in line with your shoulders, push up onto your forearms and toes, keeping your back straight and your elbows on the ground.
- » Hold for a few seconds, and then lower yourself to the floor.

- » Get on your hands and knees, keeping your back straight.
- » Round your lower back as much as you can toward the ceiling.
- » Then arch your back so that your stomach comes toward the floor.
- » Repeat 10 times.



The Cat-Cow



The Arch







- » Lie on your back with your arms by your sides.
- » Gradually lift your hips using your back, buttocks, and abdominal muscles.
- » Hold for five seconds, and then relax

Always check first with your doctor before starting an exercise program and get a list of helpful exercises.



BUSTING MYTHS ABOUT CLBP

Here are some common **Myths and Facts** about CLBP.^{9,10}

| | MYTHS | FACTS |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Bed rest is the best | Unless the cause is recent injury or strain, bed rest worsens CLBP. |
|  | CLBP is caused by injury | Disc degeneration, diseases, infections, and even inherited conditions can cause CLBP too. |
|  | Exercise is bad for CLBP | Regular exercise prevents CLBP. |
|  | Being overweight doesn't contribute to my CLBP | CLBP can occur in those who are unfit or overweight. Extra body weight compresses the spine and squeezes vertebral discs. High amounts of belly fat causes poor posture and slouching resulting in painful CLBP. |
|  | Don't Lift Heavy Objects | The way you lift is most important than the weight you lift. Do not attempt to lift heavy weight beyond your capability. |
|  | Applying heat will help a sore back | Applying heat can worsen inflammation in the joint and surrounding muscles and ligaments. When in doubt about ice and heat, it is always best to take the advice of your physician. |

SIMPLE WAYS TO PREVENT CLBP

Follow these recommendations to keep one's back healthy.⁶

1. SOME GENERAL TIPS



Eat a nutritious diet

(sufficient daily intake of calcium, phosphorus, and vitamin D)



Exercise regularly

(low-impact, age-appropriate exercises specifically targeted to strengthening lower back and abdominal muscles)



Maintain a healthy weight



Quit smoking



Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes.

2. SLEEPING POSITIONS FOR CLBP

If you have CLBP, always sleep on a firm surface. Here are a few sleeping positions to try to relieve your painful CLBP. ^{6,11}



Sleep on your side with a pillow between your knees



Sleep on your back in a reclined position

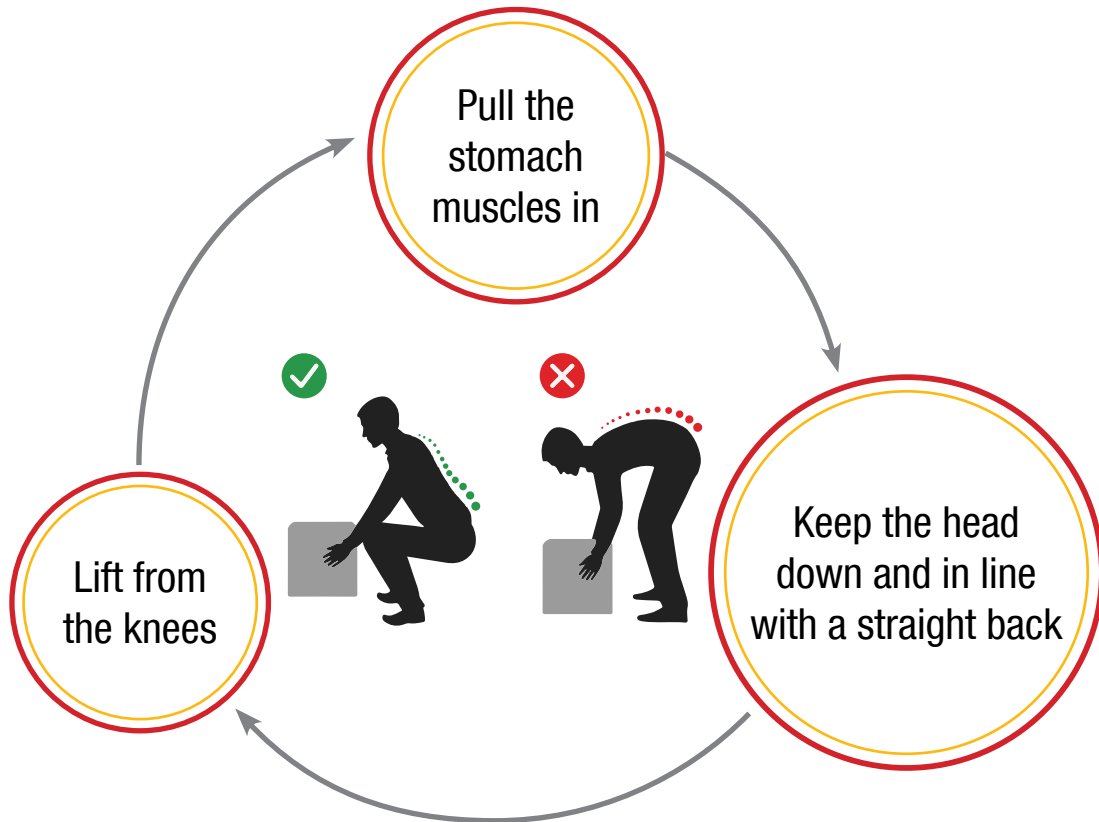


Sleep on your side in a fetal position
(helps open the joints in the spine and relieve pressure by reducing the curvature of the spine.)



Sleep on your stomach with a pillow under your abdomen

3. LIFTING OBJECTS WITH CLBP⁶



Don't lift heavy objects



When lifting, keep objects close to the body

Do not twist when lifting



4. CLBP DURING PREGNANCY

Backache is one of the most common chronic pregnancy problems. CLBP can persist 3 months-1 year after delivery as well.^{12,13}

What should I do to ease the pain?

There are several things you can do to prevent or ease CLBP such as:



Wear supportive clothing and comfortable shoes



Use heat or cold packs to soothe sore muscles



Sit in chairs with good back support/tuck a small pillow behind your lower back



When lifting something, squat down, bend your knees, and keep your back straight



Do not bend at the waist to pick up things

Sleeping on your side with a pillow between knees and under belly



Do not stand for a long time

When to report to a doctor?

Consult your doctor if you have severe back pain, or if the pain goes on for more than two weeks to rule out other causes of the pain.



COMMON POSTURE MISTAKES AND FIXES

Maintaining a wrong posture can adversely affect your lower back. Here are some common posture mistakes you must avoid.^{9,14,15,16,17}

Slouching causes strain and increases tension in the muscles, which may in turn cause pain.



Wearing high heels, excessive weight around the stomach & pregnancy can contribute to wrong standing posture



Leaning on one leg



Sitting cross-legged or with wallet in back pocket

Starfish sleeping posture



Stomach sleeping posture



POSTURE FIXES

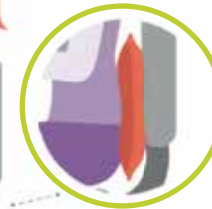
Follow these correct posture to avoid CLBP^{6,9,14}

Use ergonomically designed chair at home or office.

Place your screen at eye level



Put your feet on a low stool when sitting for a long time.



Place a pillow/rolled-up towel for lumbar support.



Switch sitting positions. Periodically walk around the office or gently stretch muscles to relieve tension.

Keep your body in perfect alignment with your neck straight and shoulders parallel with the hips:

- Keep your shoulders back and relaxed.
- Pull in your stomach.
- Keep your feet hip distance apart.
- Balance your weight evenly on both feet.
- Try not to tilt your head forward, backwards or sideways.
- Keep your legs straight and knees relaxed.



WHEN SHOULD I SEE A DOCTOR?

CLBP has varied causes. See a doctor if your pain is not improving despite trying simple treatments. Your doctor may recommend specialist treatments suitable for your condition.



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