



BACK PAIN

Back pain is common, but can manifest in different ways:

- Dull or sharp
- Aching or stabbing
- Mild or Severe
- Diffuse and generalized over a large area, or localized and specific to one area
- Constant or intermittent

Back pain in young adults can be due to:

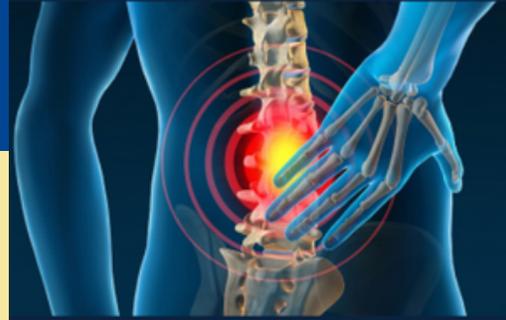
- Bulging or ruptured disk
- Strain or injury to muscle or ligament
- Nerve pinching or damage

How is back pain prevented?

- **Balance** your posture when sitting and standing
- When lifting something off the ground, instead of bending over, squat down and "**lift with your legs**"
- Avoid standing for long periods of time, **shift your weight** regularly
- Sit in chairs with **firm support** for your back, instead of soft chairs
- Sleep on a firm, flat mattress. (See image below to illustrate correct sleep posture) Lay on your side with a pillow under your head and between your knees, or on your back with pillow under your head and knees
- Wear a **backpack over both shoulders**
- Safely **exercise regularly**

Self treatment for mild, short-term, low back pain:

- Stop any activities that cause or exacerbate pain
- Rest: Lay on a firm mattress on your side as shown in the image
- Cold: Ice packs for 20 minutes every 2 hours
- Warmth: Hot shower, warm bath, wet warm towel, heating pad, hot water bottle
- Over-the-counter (OTC) pain medications: Acetaminophen(Tylenol) or ibuprofen(Advil) can reduce your pain, inflammation, and swelling. If you take any prescription medications, check with a provider about interactions before taking any OTC medications.



Call UHS if your back pain:

- Persists past a few weeks
- Is severe and doesn't improve with rest
- Severe spasm or shooting pain to legs, buttocks, or below the knee.
- Causes weakness, numbness or tingling in one or both legs
- Is accompanied by unexplained weight loss
- Causes new bowel or bladder problems, including frequent, painful, or bloody urination
- Is accompanied by a fever
- Follows a fall, blow to your back or other injury



Correct sleeping postures



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