

How you can help yourself

Here are some tips that will help you to care for your back:

1. Keeping active can help with most back pain and will keep your back healthy. Prolonged bed rest is usually not good for your back and delays recovery
2. When lifting and carrying always keep the item close to your body. Make sure to bend your knees and let your legs do the work. Try not to twist your back - turn with your feet
3. Take regular exercise (aim for 30 minutes every day). People who are physically fit generally experience less back pain and recover faster if they do get it
4. Pace yourself when undertaking any physical activity, especially when it is intensive or you are unaccustomed to it e.g. spring cleaning or tidying the garden after the winter
5. Adjust your car seats, use a rolled-up towel to support your lower back and take regular breaks on long journeys
6. Mattresses and sofas wear out over time and can cause back pain. If you have one that is over seven years old it may be time to get a new one

Early diagnosis and treatment can aid recovery and get you back to normal activities more quickly.

Around half of those who suffer an episode of back pain will have a recurrence of symptoms within a few years. Stress can increase the amount of pain you feel by magnifying the effect of tension and muscle spasms. Your osteopath can give you advice about methods to aid your recovery and maintain a healthy back.

REMEMBER: Back pain is rarely due to any serious disease and the long-term outlook is good. If you do have any concerns about your back you can discuss these with your osteopath.



We are members of the Institute of Osteopathy, the professional membership organisation for osteopaths, committed to the support and development of the osteopathic profession.

Membership of the Institute of Osteopathy affords assurances to the public, patients and colleagues, that we provide the highest quality service and care.

For more information on the Institute of Osteopathy, visit www.iOsteopathy.org or call **01582 488455**

To make an appointment, please contact:



This leaflet has been produced by the Institute of Osteopathy to provide the public with information on osteopathic care and treatment.

Osteopathy for back pain

Osteopathy for health

Some back pains shouldn't linger





About back pain

Back pain affects up to 80% of us at some point in our lives. The NHS spends more than £1 billion per year on back pain related costs, but even more money is lost through absence from the workplace caused by excessive aches and pains.

Your spine is made of solid, bony blocks reinforced by strong ligaments and muscles. It is surprisingly difficult to damage your spine but if strained, the surrounding muscles and ligaments can cause discomfort and pain.

How can your osteopath help?

Osteopathic practice is a safe and effective form of prevention, diagnosis and treatment for a wide range of health problems, including back pain. Often back pain resolves quickly by itself, but if it persists for more than a few days an osteopath may be able to help.

Osteopaths will often use gentle hands-on techniques to help resolve your back pain, together with exercise and advice designed to promote and maintain the best environment for a healthy back.

Research evidence shows that these osteopathic treatments can have beneficial effects, especially for back pain, helping you to return to normal activity.

The UK National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) provides guidance for health services and recommends manual therapy, such as that provided by osteopaths, as part of a package of care for the management of low back pain and sciatica.

Osteopathic treatment is based on the individual needs of the patient and will vary depending on your age, fitness and diagnosis, but often focuses on releasing tension, stretching muscles and mobilising joints – all of which may help to relieve your pain. You do not need to consult your GP before you visit an osteopath, although you may wish to do so

What to expect

Osteopaths are highly trained professionals who are skilled in diagnosing health issues, including those which may require further investigation.

When you first visit an osteopath, you'll be asked about your current symptoms and medical history. All information will be treated as confidential in accordance with the standards of practice set out by the General Osteopathic Council and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), May 2018.

Back pain is not normally caused by anything serious, though it is natural to worry about your symptoms and the cause. Your osteopath will always complete a routine examination that checks for more serious diagnoses and will advise and discuss with you any further action that might be required.

After this examination, your osteopath will discuss your treatment options and you will then jointly decide an appropriate and suitable treatment plan, and the likely associated costs. This plan may involve several visits and, very occasionally, further tests and/or referrals to another appropriate health care professional.

Your treatment may begin at your first appointment. You may experience mild discomfort afterwards, but in most cases this will pass within 24 hours. If you have any concerns about your treatment you are encouraged to discuss them further with your osteopath.

If you wish, you are more than welcome to bring someone with you to your consultation.

