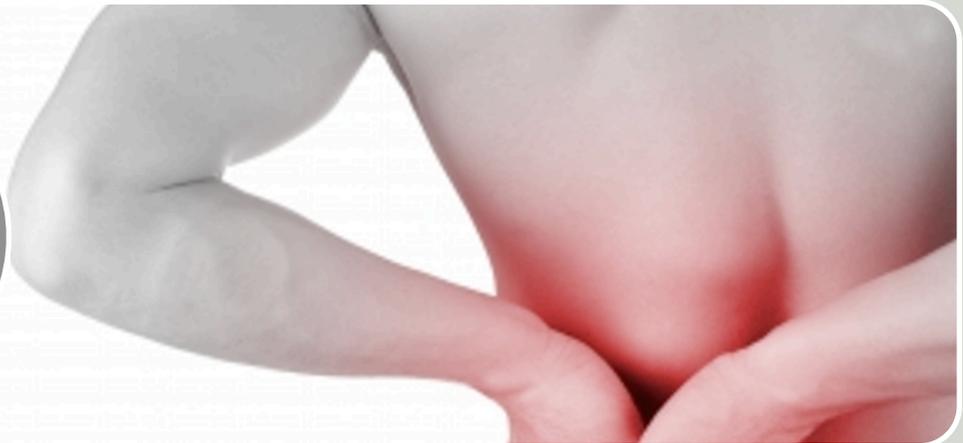


# BACK PAIN

Massage, heat and ice help control pain and spasm without drugs.



## YOU DON'T HAVE TO LET BACK PAIN RULE YOUR LIFE!

It is normal to feel tired, miserable and grumpy when you have chronic pain. But there are things you can do to assist with the pain:

**Physiotherapy** - See the therapist I recommend. If you are seeing someone who just puts machines and/or hot packs on you, then you are wasting your time and money. Manipulations do help with pain and spasm. Mobilizations (like massage) can also provide relief from symptoms. If you are seeing a manipulative therapist (e.g. chiropractor) who does not give you rehabilitation exercises - you are also wasting your time and money. Acupuncture etc is useless. Pilate's and Alexander are occasionally useful.

**Medication** - Paracetamol is a good pain killer if taken regularly, every 4-6 hours. Anti-inflammatories are painkillers as well as helping with arthritis. Codeine (e.g. Panadeine Forte / Mersyndol) and Valium are addictive. I may prescribe pain relieving and nighttime sedative medication if needed.

**Exercises** - The best general exercises I find are water based ie. swimming or running/walking in the water. Other good exercises are

regular walks, yoga and bike riding. **You should remain as active as possible!**

The physical therapist and I will give specific rehabilitation exercises to you. Do these at least twice a day, every day. Many people find they have less pain after completing exercises. I understand it is easier to simply go to a therapist and "have your back cracked" but it is not treating the cause of your problem.

### Rehabilitation exercises fall into 3 broad types;

1. Stretching exercises to increase and maintain flexibility.
2. Strengthening exercises to build up muscle power especially in the 'girdle' muscles.
3. Control exercises to help your posture and coordination

Work is good, it allows you to concentrate on things other than your pain and it provides you with money. Work as much as possible with sensible breaks and stretching as long as your pain does not worsen.



### The Facts:

- 80 % of the population gets moderate to severe back pain at some stage of their life.
- Blaming others for your pain e.g. accident / injury does not help.
- You are the person who is responsible for getting better.
- Less than 3% of people with severe back pain need surgery.