

# Risk Factors for Chronic Low Back Pain

Low back pain is a common condition it affects approximately XXXX of the population, these people experience a range of effects from discomfort and poor sleep to debilitating pain and the inability to work.

## Our health depends on a range of factors:

Our genetic inheritance—body type posture, inflammatory disease  
Our past— previous injuries, occupations, childbirth  
Our— daily routine, what we do with our bodies

## Risk Factors:

Manual Work— Heavy manual work that involves lifting and repetitive actions increases the chance of back problems.

Previous Trauma— A past history of back problems, road traffic accidents, falls etc can all contribute to back problems.

Poor Diet— We are what we eat, if your diet is low on nutrients you are not getting the building blocks for good health. Diets which are high in refined carbohydrates i.e. processed foods and sugars promote inflammation.

Obesity— excess weight causes bad posture, this loads the spine in ways it was not made for predisposing for chronic back problems.

Smoking— can be associated with other poor lifestyle characteristics but it also places a toxic load on the body which makes it harder for it to deal with inflammation.

Sedentary Occupation—Jobs that involve excessive sitting in one posture can

Lack of Physical Exercise

Some of these factors we can have no influence over but others are within our control we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

If I have a problem now what will it be like in five years time?

What do I need to change?

Do I have enough information?

Do I need any help/ resources to make the change?

Quite often we put unnecessary barriers in the way of change because it is easier to remain as we are, unless you are prepared to be honest with ourselves we will find an excuse .

Your Osteopath can help you plan a pathway to a more healthy way of life.

See our other handouts including:

Osteopathic Strain Patterns  
Get More Active  
Diet and Inflammation



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## Common Attitudes to Exercise

### *"I'm no good at exercising"*

Many people lack the motivation to exercise they seek every excuse and say that keeping fit is too much effort. They are storing up problems for the future or not engaging with their bodies.

The answer is to find an activity which you can enjoy at your level and find someone else to do it with. In this way you motivate each other.

If you have poor self motivation join a regular class, but you must find a class that suits your needs not just book into the closest –or you may not last.

Consider:

- Yoga
- Pillates
- Swimming
- Aerobics (not step)

Be realistic in what you seek to achieve, nothing happens over night.

### *"I used to play for the county"* – Recognising cycles in life.

Sorry, - no one is really interested in what you used to do, we've all done many things but although our past will leave it's mark, you are only as fit as your age and recent activity levels will allow.

The main thing is to realise when you have let things slide, through family or work commitments, the classes that you used to attend have fallen by the wayside. Everyone does this. Often it happens slowly and it is only after an injury that you realise. Turn the trauma into an opportunity and reorganise your routine. If you feel that you don't have time for a change in routine then you need to consider your priorities you may find it hard to get a new job, but where do you go to buy a new back?

### Exercise Maniacs

Some people are addicted to the chemicals (endorphins) produced when they body exercise. They are often highly driven, competitive types, who enjoy high impact sports. These people maybe over-exercising and risking damage to their bodies. While they are young the body is capable of adjusting and adapting to regular trauma, but as they age, their past catches up with them in a series of repetitive or chronic injuries, which never seem to heal. These people risk going one of two ways; often, when they can no longer compete at their original level or to a standard they are happy with, they may give up sport altogether. This is a problem as the damage that they have done to their bodies is controlled by good muscle balance. As muscles weaken, problems arise with worn joints which may prevent them from exercising again. Others may soldier on at their sport at a different level plagued by re-currant injury.

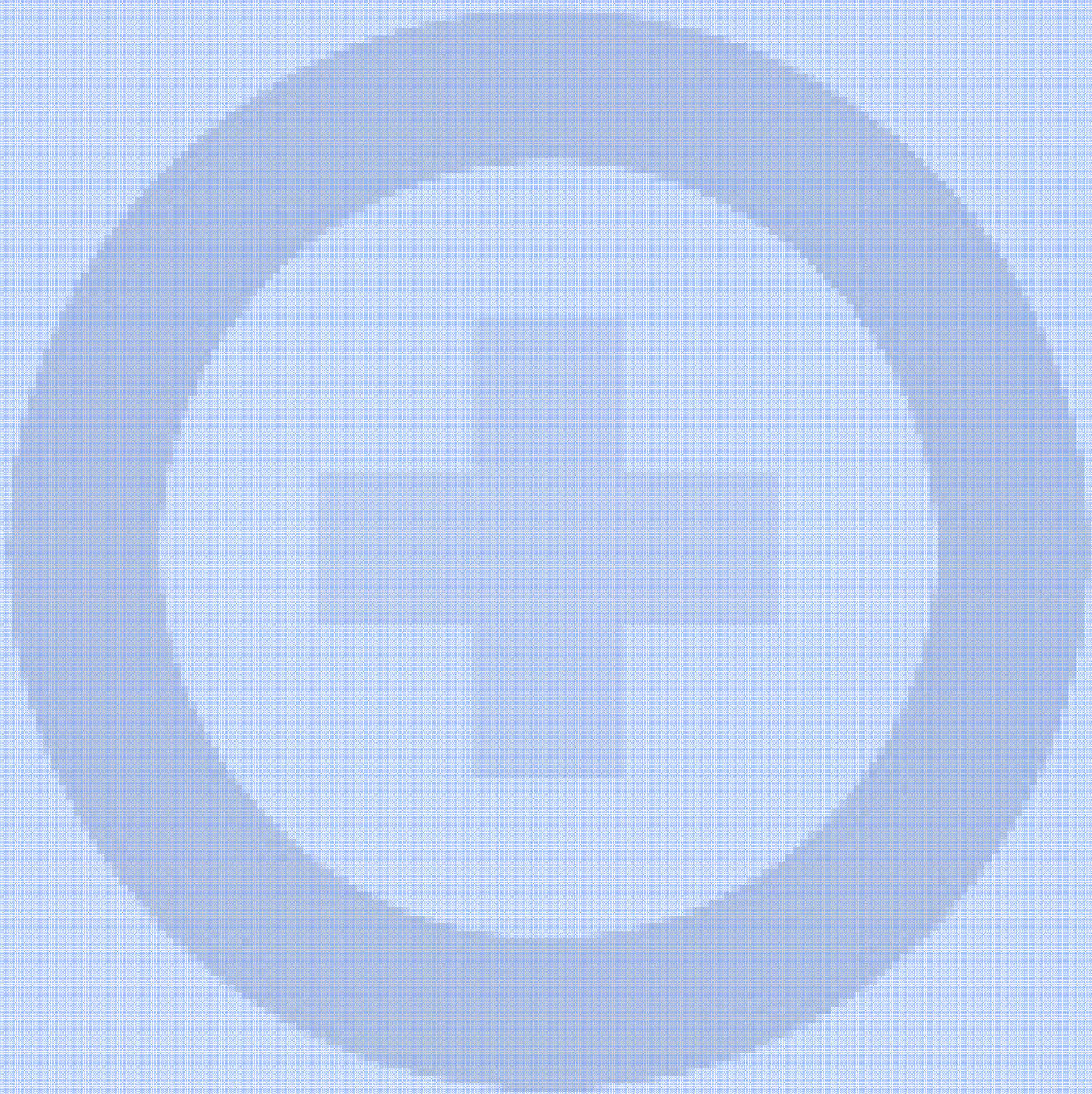
The key to avoiding these situations is a realistic attitude, be aware of your limitations and look to express your desire for exercise in other sports that are less strain on the body, or maintain your sport but combine it with another that will balance out the strain pattern inflicted by the first. If you do not have sufficient flexibility of mind then you will pay for a closed attitude with more pain, frustration and failure.

It's your choice !





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BeWell - Be Pro-Active  
Take Control of your Pain  
Prevention is better than cure-  
Ask Your Osteopath for a Treatment Plan that suits you.