At some point, nearly everyone gets hit with back pain, especially lower-back pain. Such pain can feel sharp. Or it can be a dull ache with tingling, burning, or numbness. Back pain is the second-most common reason for a trip to a doctor and one of the major contributors to disability worldwide.

Many non-chiropractic health care professionals recognize the value of chiropractic back pain treatment. In a *Journal of the American Medical Association* article published in 2013, the authors suggested chiropractic for low-back pain. Surgery was mentioned as an option only if all else fails.

In another highly respected medical journal, manual manipulation was shown to beat medication for short-term relief of chronic back pain. With prescription pain drug abuse now classified as an epidemic in the United States and the number of spinal fusions soaring 500 percent over the last decade, the essential services provided by doctors of chiropractic (DCs) represent a primary care approach for the prevention, diagnosis and conservative management of back pain and spinal disorders that can often enable patients to reduce or avoid the need for these riskier treatments.

But Doesn’t Back Pain Simply Disappear by Itself?

Researchers used to believe that back pain would heal on its own. Minor back injuries do often go away on their own within a day or two. But although back pain may disappear temporarily, it is relatively likely to return. It has been demonstrated that more than 33 percent of people who experience low-back pain find that it lasts longer than 30 days.

If your back pain is not resolving quickly, it may be the result of mechanical problems that a doctor of chiropractic can address. Many chiropractic patients with long-lasting or recurring back pain feel improvement shortly after starting chiropractic treatment.

Other Causes of Back Pain

Back pain, however, does not necessarily result from straining the back with too much weekend basketball or golf or gardening. It can also be caused by arthritis, obesity, psychological stress, diseases of internal organs that may include kidney stones, kidney infections, blood clots, or bone loss.

Back pain can also last longer than expected when a patient, fearing further injury, cuts back on physical activity.
How We Harm Our Backs

Many factors negatively affect our backs, including poor posture; improper lifting, reaching and twisting; too much sitting, or occupations that are known to be particularly hard on backs. Nursing home workers, delivery drivers, farmers, firefighters/EMTs, landscapers, and construction workers may strain their backs by lifting heavy objects or people.

Auto mechanics and shingle roofers frequently twist their spines into physically awkward positions.

Police officers strain their backs by sitting in their cars for prolonged periods, followed by bursts of often strenuous activity.

Heavy truck and tractor-trailer drivers often compress their spines by sitting in one position in a vibrating vehicle for hours at a stretch. This can lead to disc degeneration.

References


For more information on prevention and wellness, or to find a doctor of chiropractic near you, visit ACA’s website at www.acatoday.org/patients.

This patient information page is a public service of the American Chiropractic Association. The information and recommendations appearing on this page are appropriate in most instances, but they are not a substitute for a diagnosis by a specialist. For specific information concerning your health condition, consult the Doctors of Chiropractic at Life in Motion Chiropractic and Wellness.