

12 Ways To Live With Less Back Pain In Just 2 Weeks

*...Without Taking Painkillers
Or Having To See The GP.*



By Dr Jeremy Andrews, DC, MChiro, BSc

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About the Author

Dr Jeremy is a Doctor of Chiropractic and Director of West Chiropractic.

He had an interest in biology and mechanics at school as well as being a keen sportsman. This prompted a degree in Human Musculoskeletal Science at the University of Bristol. Unlike most Chiropractors he hadn't heard much about Chiropractic as a kid, but that soon changed following a challenging back injury whilst at Bristol when he experienced first-hand how debilitating back pain can be. Not being able to move from bed for 2 days just before his finals, he struggled to find a suitable treatment.

Dr Jeremy was on a cycle ride later in the year and was chatting with a Chiropractor about his frustrations at the lack of knowledge and treatment for debilitating back pain. The Chiropractor offered for Jeremy to observe him several times and it was after this insight into the profession that he realised there was more to health than just taking medications and painkillers

Following this experience, Jeremy enrolled at the AECC and spent 4 years in Bournemouth developing his skills and gaining his Doctor of Chiropractic.

Dr Jeremy believes that everyone should live their best self and does everything he can to make that happen for all clients that visit West Chiropractic.

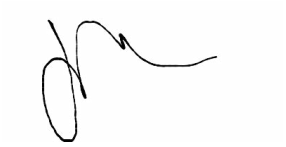
Outside of the clinic, Dr Jeremy enjoys triathlons, completing an Ironman in 2017. He is now turning his attention to Crossfit competitions and spending time with his partner, Charlotte.

Dr Jeremy has performed over 20,000 chiropractic adjustments to a variety of different clients, from the ages of 93 to 9 days old, professional footballers at Bournemouth Football Club as well as London Irish Rugby players.

He created this guide as he was seeing a lot of people were suffering needlessly with back pain each day and that this was beginning to affect their quality of life. These strategies and techniques are what we use in the clinic day to day with our patients to help them alleviate back pain quickly and effectively in order to keep our patients fit and strong.

If you have any questions about the techniques outlined in the document please get in touch with us at info@westchiropractic.co.uk or subscribe to our mailing list where we send weekly information with more strategies on how to prevent back pain and stay healthy.

Thank you for reading this guide – I hope that you can use it as a stepping stone towards better health and West Chiropractic is here to support you along the way.

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Jeremy Andrews, DC, MChiro, BSc

Introduction

This guide was created as a simple go-to when you are suffering from back pain. There may be some techniques that work better than others for different people. That is fine and expected as everybody is different; although we all do have a spine, everybody moves in different ways which can cause different problems that will be solved by different exercises.

So with that in mind, it would be my advice to try one of these techniques for 3 days at a time to see how your body responds. Once your body responds well to an exercise, you can return to this particular technique, using it on a daily basis.

Some of the exercises are strength based, so it will take time for your body to adapt and build new muscle in new areas. Just be patient.

As always if you don't know how to do something or need help, then just contact us at the clinic and we can talk you through everything.

All of the techniques discussed in the guide are natural, safe and easily accessible for everybody. However, if any of these techniques make anything worse, stop doing it and contact us and we can tailor an approach suited to you.

Easy Ways To Get Rid Of Back Pain

1 DON'T SIT for long periods of time -Sitting is the new smoking

People who sit at a desk for more than 6 hours per day are at risk of developing low back pain. The reason being is that the human body is not designed to be in this hunched position for long periods,. It can cause early degeneration in the low back and wear on the discs (discs are the spongy shock absorbers between the bones).

Even if you have had a desk assessment and are sitting perfectly, there is only so long the spine can cope with this stress. We commonly hear of patients not being able to get comfortable at work and having to keep rearranging the way they sit or what they sit on.

So what's the solution? Well I can't tell you to stop sitting, a lot of people have to do this for work. So what we propose is that you have an alarm or post it note on your screen that reminds you every 15 minutes to stand up, stretch your arms over your head for 30 seconds and then return to a sitting position.

If you have the option at work, I would trial a standing desk. These are desks that can move up and down and are modified to the individual user. Standing activates muscles in the core and stomach and will stabilise the spine and strengthen it.

2 Keep moving-light exercise-walking and swimming

Movement is the key to most back issues. If you are in pain the last thing you will want to do is actually move. Your brain says 'stay in bed, don't get up.' That is unfortunately the worst thing you can do as it will tighten all the muscles up and make them stiffer. I know it is hard and agonising (believe me - I have been there, being bed bound for 2 days). However, the best thing is to keep moving. Try putting an ice pack on your spine for 10 minutes before you get up, then slide the knees on to the floor and slowly leverage yourself up to a standing position, taking small steps, one at a time.

The movement gets the pelvis and hips moving, the blood will begin to pump around the muscles in the low back and drain the inflamed muscles and once the inflammation starts to reduce the back will start to feel less painful and less stiff. If you are going to sit down, make sure it's in a hard chair with a straight back and your knees are below your hips (this goes for driving as well).

If you can do some exaggerated walking with high knees in order to get more movement throughout your spine, this will help.

3 Drink water

This may seem simple, but you would be surprised at how many people don't actually drink any plain water during the day. Drinking water in juice, tea or coffee unfortunately doesn't count. Caffeine actually dehydrates you even more.

The reason water is so important is that it keeps the muscles around your spine hydrated, which means they are soft and flexible rather than being tight and strained when you are dehydrated.

Another reason is that the disc that is between the bones in your spine is largely made up of water. When you are hydrated the discs are strong and full, this means they can absorb shock more in the spine, acting as added protection.

4 McGill's big 3

Dr Stuart McGill is a spine specialist and has spent years perfecting the best exercises to help with low back pain and also to strengthen the spine. He has narrowed it down to 3 exercises called the bird dog, curl up and the side bridge. These exercises can increase the stability of the low back and prevent long-term chronic pain.

These are all documented on our youtube channel, West Chiropractic. You can watch Jeremy performing them, taking you through the exercise step by step. If you can't access them on youtube we can send you them in an email.

5 Pelvic Tilt exercise

As well as the exercises referred to above, this exercise is great at 'flossing' the spine. It is originally a pilates exercise. Pilates can be great for low back pain if done carefully with an instructor experienced in dealing with people with back pain.

The pelvis is the platform for the rest of the spine. The tailbone is in the middle and the ring of bone goes all the way around and allows the hips to attach to either side. When you move your pelvis back and forth it also allows the spine to move back and forwards and this can allow the spinal bones to glide over each other and stretch the ligaments in between. This is a great exercise if you sit for long periods or want to get warmed up for any activity, like gardening or a long walk.

Simply stand up, place your hands on either side of your pelvis to make it easier to feel. You want to tip your hips back gently and hold there for 3 seconds and then roll the hips forwards gently and hold for 3 seconds. This needs to be a fluid movement. Repeat for 1 minute and then rest for 30 seconds. Try performing this 3 times. For more information on the best technique, email us for the video or visit our youtube channel.

6 Wobble Cushion

This is a great and cheap tool to increase core stability whilst sitting for long periods of time, for example at a desk behind a computer. The wobble cushion is a disc full of air and when you put your weight on it, it will make you wobble around. This will cause you to tense your stomach and pelvic floor muscles, keeping them active while you are sitting which will activate that powerful protective brace that surrounds your spine. This means less force will go through your discs and will help avoid early degeneration in the spine.

They are available at amazon for around £10.

7 Sleeping position

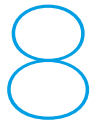
We spend 1/3 of our life sleeping so it's important to get it right. So many times we hear 'I wake up with back pain in the morning'. This is so common and is to do with the way we are sleeping. Imagine if you have a bad spine that is not being supported for 8 hours per night, it will exacerbate the condition and not allow it to rest and heal.

The best position for most people is to be lying on the side with the arms out in front and legs tucked up at 45 degrees to keep the spine in a neutral position. However, what we also hear is 'Well I start like that and then I end up on my stomach with my head turned to the side'. A way to help this is to tuck a small pillow between the legs to prevent you rolling over when you fall asleep. It's not full proof but this can help.

Sleeping on the stomach is probably the worst position to be in, it puts a lot of stress on the spine and also your neck as it has to be turned to one side.

The mattress quality can play a huge part in how well your spine is looked after during the night. I can't recommend which mattress firmness will suit you best as everyone is different and you have to try and find something that will work best for you. However, there are lots of retail outlets that now offer a 30 day satisfaction guarantee.

What I must emphasise is how important it is to change your mattress once every 5 years, as they get worn down and the quality reduces.



Clothes to wear-no high heels, use of MBT's

Something as simple as clothing choice can play a huge role in the way our bodies function. For example, wearing high heels will tip the pelvis forward and force more pressure on to the low back and can exacerbate a bad back, whereas flat shoes keep the spine and pelvis neutral and stable.

MBT's are a shoe designed for people with back issues. They have a large foam sole that is U-shaped which provides a rocking motion whilst the person is walking to minimise impact and ease the joints through the walking motion.

Tight jeans can also constrict certain movements like climbing stairs and can force the low back to be used. Perhaps try avoiding skinny jeans and try something slightly looser and more comfortable which you can move easily in.



Chiropractic

Chiropractic principles are simple yet effective. The aim is to remove stress from the body in order to allow the body to function as it was intended. Often pain is just a warning sign that something isn't working properly; the tip of the iceberg.



Chiropractors focus on the spine and have a particular interest in the low back. At West Chiropractic this is one of the most common conditions we see.

The reason Chiropractors are particularly interested in the spine is because it houses the nervous system. The nervous system is a highway from the brain to every single cell, tissue, organ, muscle and joint in the body. This means that everything in the body is under the absolute control of the nervous system.

Certain activities in life can put stress on our body. Stress comes in three forms:

1. Physical- sitting at a desk for work, driving long distances, traumas during sport, falling over.
2. Chemical- drinking alcohol, smoking, medication, sugar.
3. Emotional- work problems, family difficulties.

These can all impact our body in different ways and can cause it to work in a sub-optimal way. The body is amazing at compensating over a number of months, even years, before it becomes apparent that something is wrong. Often we hear people say that they don't recall a particular incident, simply that they just got out of bed and their back seized up. This is due to a number of years of stress on the body whereby eventually your body says "enough".

People ask us: What do Chiropractors do?

The Chiropractor job is to:

- ▶ Find the root cause of the issue to prevent it from coming back.
- ▶ Inform you what exactly is happening by way of a diagnosis.
- ▶ Outline treatment options and make a plan to get rid of the problem.
- ▶ Make sure that it is corrected long term so that you can become healthier, achieve your goals and prevent reoccurrence.

Please feel free to contact [West Chiropractic](#) for more information.

10 Back brace

A back brace is essentially a corset for your back. It fits around the waist and is pulled tight to compress the back. Essentially, it acts as another layer of muscle. This can be an extremely effective method to help with back pain; however, it should be used carefully as over reliance can cause the back to become lazy.

You may have heard of something called 'the core'. What people mean by this is the layers of muscle on the stomach that go all the way around and feed in to the back muscles. These muscles are all connected and the stronger they are, the less likely someone is to have back issues, hence why some people have great results when they do pilates and core stability programmes. When we sit for long periods of time, our core becomes underactive so when we go to stand up or reach for something, these are times when the back 'can go' as our body is not ready for a change in position.

The back brace acts as a 'fake core'; it pulls everything tight and puts tension on the muscles artificially. This in turn tightens up the ligaments around the spine and means the bones can't move as much and can cause pain in the inflamed areas.

A back brace therefore is a great tool to use when you have a very acute onset of low back pain and need to get something done; for example, travelling into work and you can't bear standing on the train or driving for 30 minutes. Put the back brace on to deal with the short term, then when you get to your destination, take your brace off and refer back to McGill's 'big 3' to build that natural core, rather than becoming reliant on the brace.

11 What to eat- oily fish, greens

It sounds strange to be talking about what we should be eating when we have back pain as how can this be linked? However, what you eat plays a very important part in the way in which the body functions and heals.

Eating Omega 3's and 6's can play a role in reducing overall inflammation in the body which can be really helpful with chronic low back pain. Omega's come in oily fish such as salmon and mackerel, as well as nuts and seeds.

In addition, eating fresh raw greens such as kale, spinach and broccoli can help reduce overall acidity within the blood and help your body function better to deal with pain.

12 Hot or cold?

Should I be putting ice or heat on my back? The last thing you want to do on a cold winters day is get home and put a bag of frozen peas on your back. However, this can be one of the best ways to reduce inflammation in the spine and alleviate pain. A cold pack should always be wrapped in a tea towel to prevent ice burns and only used for 10 minutes at any one time. Always wait 30 minutes before your next application.


Conclusion

These are 12 steps that you can literally start today to improve your overall health and posture and help alleviate back pain.

Over the coming days and weeks, I will send you some more advice and tips on how you can build on these simple strategies. I will also be sharing with you how Chiropractic can make a massive difference to your life.

I hope this is the beginning of a great, long-term relationship where myself and my colleagues at West Chiropractic can become your source of leading edge health and advice and we can make a real difference to your life.

Many thanks for reading,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Jeremy Andrews', is centered on a light gray rectangular background.

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