

## Summary:

- Lower Back Pain is very common in the UK and Worldwide.
- Many structures can be injured and will often heal in normal healing times of 2-6 weeks.
- Evidence suggests taking anti-inflammatory medication **in the first 48 hours** of pain might delay your healing by suppressing chemicals required for repair.
- X-Rays only show bones and therefore are rarely needed if you haven't had a significant impact/fall that might indicate a fracture.
- Scans (e.g. MRI) are not normally required in the first instance as they don't change your initial management.
- "Hands on" Physiotherapy techniques have evidence supporting their use to help ease your pain.
- Regular exercise is important to aid your recovery and ease pain. Never take to your bed for long periods.
- Gradually increase your activity sensibly as your pain settles. Consult your Physiotherapist for personalised advice.

## **Continue to care...**

Once your pain has settled it is important that you make exercise a regular part of your life to prevent recurrence of pain. It is recommended that adults do 30 minutes of moderately intense exercise 5 days a week.

Functional stability exercises should be taught by a qualified professional and diligently performed. If taught and performed correctly your tissue stability and flexibility should improve, hopefully reducing the chances of further episodes of pain.

# Advance Physiotherapy

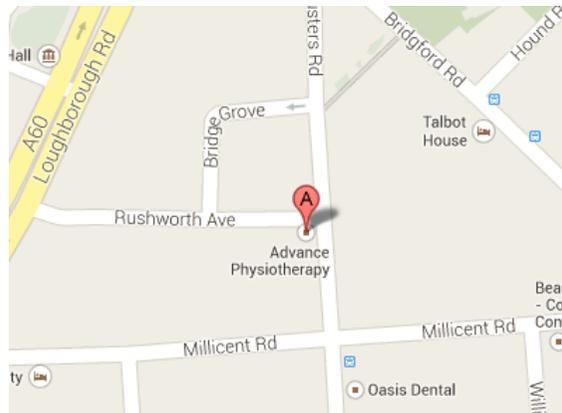
[www.advance-physiotherapy.com](http://www.advance-physiotherapy.com)

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Registered with the Health and Care Professions Council.

**Our Physiotherapists are all Senior Level Therapists and strongly believe in "Hands On" treatment techniques for the majority of our patients.**

**The experience of our clinicians ranges from NHS hospitals through to Elite sports clubs and supporting Team GB athletes at the Olympic Games.**



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**Lower Back Pain**  
**Patient Information sheet**

## Lower Back Pain (LBP)—The Facts

- LBP is the second most common reason people in the UK seek medical advice with over 7 million GP visits annually.<sup>1</sup>
- The estimated costs to the NHS exceed £480 million annually with £197 million spent in Private Consultations and Prescriptions.<sup>1</sup>
- The cost to the UK economy in missed days from work is believed to exceed £5 billion.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the level of pain people sometimes experience, the majority of episodes of LBP will resolve within normal healing times of 2-6 weeks provided simple advice is followed.

## Cause of Pain

There are multiple structures that can cause pain in the lower back and establishing the exact structure causing the pain can on occasions be difficult, particularly at the onset of pain. However as long as your Doctor/Physio ensures the pain is from a mechanical structure (e.g. Ligament, Muscle, or Joint) your treatment principles remain the same.

If you experience any of the following symptoms you should **urgently** see a doctor.

1. Difficulty controlling your bladder/bowels.
2. Numbness in your groin/legs.
3. Difficulty moving your legs.

## Healing

There are three stages of healing of a damaged structure.

### **1. Inflammation** (2 hours -2 weeks)

Within minutes of an injury, the healing process will begin. Blood flow will increase to the damaged area to bring chemicals to aid this process. Inflammation is therefore an important part of the initial healing process and some research suggests **not** taking anti-inflammatory medication (e.g. Ibuprofen) during the first **48hrs** of the pain to allow the body to deliver healing cells/chemicals to the area. Immediately suppressing this response may delay your healing. During this time you should avoid activities that increase your pain too much and take simple pain relief such as Paracetamol.

### **2. Repair Stage** (2 Days to 6 weeks)

In this stage the body repairs itself as it lays down new tissue to repair the damaged area. Activity should be slowly increased using pain as your guide, and stability muscles around your back and legs should be exercised regularly.

### **3. Remodelling Stage** (Can exceed 12 months)

The new tissue adopts strength, stability and range dependent on the forces it is exposed to for several months after injury. It is therefore important to continue exercising the tissue during this phase even if your pain has gone.

## Treatment of pain

### **Medication**

Simple “over the counter” medication can be useful for managing your symptoms provided you have no allergies. Paracetamol and Ibuprofen (anti-inflammatory) can be purchased from your local

Pharmacist and be taken together. Always read the information on the packaging. Your GP can advise you further if other medication is required.

## **Exercise**

It is important that you **DON'T** take to bed or remain in one position too long as this will make your pain worse. **Simple exercises, which should be prescribed based on your personal need, can aid your recovery.**

The following simple exercises can assist keeping your back mobile. Gently exercise as your pain allows you to do.



**“Knees to Chest”** Lay on your back & draw one knee at a time up towards your chest. If able to, you may raise both together.

**Repeat x10 times.**

**“Knee Rolls”** Lay on your back with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Slowly rock your knees from side to side, moving them as close to the floor as your pain allows.

**Repeat x10 either side.**



**“Cat-Camel”** Start on your hands and knees and alternate arching and rounding your spine. Work for 30 seconds, rest and repeat

## **Reference**

1. [www.backpainexpert.co.uk](http://www.backpainexpert.co.uk)