

QuadMed Wellness News



Who gets back pain?

Eight out of 10 people will experience back pain in their lives. Back pain is one of the most common reasons people go to the doctor or miss work. More than 80 percent of people will experience complete resolution of back pain in less than six weeks. This is called “acute back pain.” Others may experience “chronic back pain” which is pain that lasts longer than three months.



What are risk factors for back pain?

- **Age:** pain is more common as people age, usually starting around 30 or 40 years old
- **Lack of exercise:** weak, unused muscles can lead to back pain
- **Excess weight:** extra weight puts extra stress on your back
- **Diseases:** arthritis can cause back pain
- **Improper lifting technique:** using your back instead of your legs can contribute to back pain
- **Smoking:** this can impair your body's ability to deliver enough nutrients to the disks in your back
- **Poor posture:** this can lead to muscle and ligament strains

What causes back pain?

Back pain can be caused by many things including the following:

- Muscle or ligament strain
- Bulging or ruptured disks
- Arthritis
- Skeletal irregularities
- Osteoporosis

When should I see a doctor about my back pain?

- New bowel or bladder problems
- Back pain is accompanied by fever
- Back pain that occurs after a fall or other injury
- Pain radiates into one or both legs, especially below the knee
- Back pain causes weakness, numbness or tingling in one or both legs
- Back pain associated with unexplained weight loss



How can I prevent back pain?

- Exercise can help keep your back muscles strong and flexible.
- Set up your work and home office ergonomically.
 - > Adjust chair height so your feet are flat on the floor
 - > Elbows should be at 90 degrees and next to your body, wrists in neutral position
 - > Monitor should be 20"- 40" away from your face and at eye level
 - > Keep your mouse close to keyboard so you are not reaching excessively
 - > Use a headset instead of a phone
- Get up and move! Do not sit for more than 60 minutes at a time. Take one minute each hour to stretch a different part of your body.
- Use good body mechanics when lifting or moving objects.
 - > Take 30 seconds to assess the situation and set yourself up for success
 - > Make sure feet are on stable ground
 - > Get as close as you can to the load
 - > Keep your back straight and hinge from your hips and knees to squat down and lift
 - > Use slow, smooth movements. Avoid jerky, hurried movements that may strain your back
 - > Avoid twisting your back while carrying a load. Instead, pivot your feet to turn.
- Maintain a healthy weight.

