



What's New at

Commitment

For your convenience, we have our newsletter on our website

www.commitmentpt.com

Feel free to look at current & past newsletters on our site!

If you would like to be included to our

E-Newsletter, please call us & give us your

E-Mail address!!!

Our Location

Commitment Physical Therapy is located at 11741 Southwest Highway in Palos Heights.

www.commitmentpt.com

Our Hours

We are open Monday thru Friday from 9:00am until 5:00pm.

For your convenience, we also offer extended and weekend hours by appointments only.

BACK PAIN OVERVIEW

The back and spine are designed to provide a great deal of strength, protecting the highly sensitive spinal cord and nerve roots, yet flexible, providing for mobility in all directions. However, there are many different parts of the spine that can produce back pain, such as irritation to the large nerve roots that run down the legs and arms, irritation to small nerves inside the spine, strains to the large back muscles, as well as any injury to the disc, bones, joints or ligaments in the spine.

Back Pain Causes:

By far the most common cause of lower back pain is a muscle strain or other soft tissue damage. While this condition is not serious, it can be severely painful. Typically, lower back pain from a muscle strain will get better within one to three weeks. Treatment usually involves a short period of rest, activity restriction, use of hot packs and/or cold packs for local discomfort, and pain medication. Over the counter pain medication used to treat muscle strain may include acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol), ibuprofen (e.g. Advil, Motrin, or naproxen (e.g. Aleve). Prescription pain medications may be recommended if the pain is severe. Typically, younger individuals (30 to 60 year olds) are more likely to experience back pain from the disc space itself (e.g. lumbar disc herniation or degenerative disc disease). Older adults (e.g. over 60) are more likely to suffer from pain related to

joint degeneration (e.g. osteoarthritis, spinal stenosis). Lumbar herniated disc: The inner core of the disc may lead out and irritate a nearby nerve root, causing sciatica (leg pain). Lumbar spinal stenosis: The spinal canal narrows due to degeneration, which can put pressure on the nerve root and cause sciatica. Degenerative disc disease: As the disc degenerates it can allow small amounts of motion in that segment of the spine and irritate a nerve root and cause sciatica. Isthmic spondylolysis: A small stress fracture allows one vertebra to slip forward on another, usually at the bottom of the spine. This can pinch the nerve, causing



lower back pain and leg pain. Osteoarthritis: Degeneration of the small facet joints in the back of the spine can cause back pain and decreased flexibility. May also lead to spinal stenosis and nerve pinching. It is important to know the underlying condition that is causing the low back pain, as treatments will often differ depending on the cause.

Back Pain Symptoms:

Acute back pain comes on suddenly and usually lasts from a few days to a few weeks. Back pain is usually considered chronic if it lasts for more than three months. Back pain can take on a wide variety of characteristics: The pain may be constant, intermittent, or only occur with certain positions or activities. The pain may remain in one spot or refer or radiate to other areas. It may be a dull ache, or a sharp or piercing or burning sensation. The problem may be in the neck or low back but may radiate into the leg or foot (sciatica), arm or hand. And back pain may include symptoms other than pain, such as weakness, numbness or tingling. Fortunately, most forms of back pain get better on their own: approximately 50% of patients will experience relief within two weeks and 90% within three months. If the pain lasts for more than a few days, is getting worse, does not respond to simple remedies such as a short period of rest, using ice or heat and over-the-counter pain relievers, then it is usually advisable to see a physician. There are two instances in which emergency medical care is needed: Bowel and/or bladder dysfunction. Progressive weakness in the legs. Fortunately, these conditions are rare.

April

Well, its finally April, and as they say April showers bring May flowers.

Hopefully this is true, because we all know that we have had our share of rain. In any case, we much rather would have rain than snow. I'm pretty sure that we all can agree on that!

Let's all start getting ready for the warm months ahead, planting gardens, proms, vacations and so on. We all deserve to enjoy each other & the weather, even though it may still be a bit nippy, we can warm each other up by just enjoying our families & be thankful for our good health.



CONTINUE: BACK PAIN

Back pain treatment:

Pain Medication:

Typical pain medications used to treat the lower back pain include acetaminophen, NSAIDs, oral steroids, narcotic drugs, muscle relaxants, and anti-depressants. Each type of medication has strengths, limitations, and risks, and the patient's particular lower back problem and overall health will determine which pain reliever, if any, is indicated.

Physical Therapy:

There is a variety of modalities and techniques that we used with low back pain patients such as: Heat or ice: Application of a cold pack or heating pad can help relieve low back pain. Some people find that alternating between the two works best.

Manual Therapy: It is thought to help relieve lower back pain by reducing pressure on sensitive structures, increasing flexibility, improving blood flow and reducing muscle tension.

Therapeutic massage: Massage therapy is thought to improve blood flow, reducing muscle stiffness, and decrease stiffness. Exercise: A back exercise and physical therapy program will usually include a

combination of strengthening, stretching, and low-impact aerobic exercise. Tens Unite: These electrical devices are used to interfere with the transmission of pain signals sent to the lower back.

Activity: Light activity speeds up healing and recovery. Immediately stop any activity that aggravates the muscles. Your physical therapist can suggest appropriate exercises, which may include stretching, swimming or walking. Prolonged bed rest – more than one or two days – should be avoided.

Epidural Injections:

An epidural injection into the spine delivers steroids that can provide lower back pain relief by decreasing inflammation in the painful area.

Lifestyle factors:

Many lifestyle changes are also important in reducing lower back pain, such as quitting smoking, weight loss, activity modification, and improved ergonomics and posture. For a minority of people with back pain, the pain is so severe it makes it difficult to function in every day life. For those people, back surgery is an option that may be considered.

Prevention Methods:

Aerobic exercise: Helps increase the strength and

endurance of the lower back. It is best to engage in regular aerobic exercise that does not strain or jolt the back, such as walking, swimming or biking. Strength and flexibility training: Proper weight training can help strengthen abdominal and back muscles, allowing them to serve as a natural corset for the back.

Maintaining a healthy weight: Excess weight strains the back muscles and increases back pain. Quitting smoking:

Smoking reduces the level of oxygen that reaches spinal tissue, thereby hindering the healing process when back muscles are strained or injured. Lifting from the knees,

not the back: When lifting heavy objects, keep the back straight and the load close to the body. Do not twist the back while lifting. Bending from the waist to pick up even lightweight objects from the floor can strain the back. If an object is heavy or awkward, do not lift it without a partner's help. Using proper posture when standing and sitting. When standing, maintain the pelvis in neutral position.

When sitting, choose a seat with good lower back support, arm rests and a swivel base. A rolled-up towel or pillow in the small of the back (lumbar area) can help maintain its normal curve. Individuals should also try to keep their knees and hips level. Sleeping on a medium-firm mattress.

Patients' Comments



"There is not one person that was more helpful than the other, everyone was equally outstanding"

A.V– Evergreen Park, IL

"All of my visits were perfect, I wouldn't change a thing"

A.M– Tinley Park, IL

"You could not better the service, because you're already doing a great job"

G.H– Hickory Hills, IL

"I was greeted every time when I entered the office & everyone was courteous & friendly"

D.R– Chicago Ridge, IL