



Introduction

What causes back pain?

- Most of us get back pain at some time. Usually the pain is not due to anything serious and passes in a matter of days;

- If you suffer back pain and are concerned about it, consult your doctor immediately and inform your line manager;
- Having back pain does not immediately mean that you cannot work, in some cases keeping your back active helps the recovery process. Your doctor can advise further.



Information

What can I do about my back pain?

The following advice, is some simple Do's and Don'ts of handling back pain:

- Do stay active as usual, if possible. But consult your doctor if the back pain persists or gets worse;
- Do inform your line manager and discuss what can be done for you to stay at work (by altering your working environment and tasks);
- Do find out about back pain and what can be done about handling it;
- Do inform the relevant health and safety manager if your back pain was a result of your work;
- Do take something to reduce the pain (consult your doctor if you are unsure);
- Don't take to bed and wait for your back to get better, the sooner you get back to normal activity the better;

- Don't worry, back pain is rarely serious and worrying often makes recovery longer;
- Don't avoid activity as a way of avoiding pain;
- Don't do things which you know make your back hurt.

Since excess weight can pull the spine out of alignment and cause a back injury, it's important to keep your weight down. Keep fit!

- Do choose exercise suitable to your level – if you are a beginner, work up gradually;
- Do take things at your own pace;
- Do make sure you drink water before, during and after the exercise;
- Do gentle warm-up stretches before and after the exercise;
- Don't continue with an activity if it makes your back hurt;
- Don't exercise if you feel ill.

Conclusion

- If you are concerned about your back, inform your line manager immediately;
- With your line manager discuss your duties and the workplace.

NOTE: If you have any questions regarding this information please contact your line manager; alternatively you can contact your regional health, safety & environmental manager.