



World
PT Day
2024

PHYSIOTHERAPY AND LOW BACK PAIN



In all types and at all stages of low back pain (LBP), rehabilitation is essential to reassure people and help you make sense of your pain, help support recovery, return to activities you enjoy and maintain independence in daily living.

The role of physiotherapy in low back pain

Physiotherapists provide expert advice, guidance and treatment for LBP. They will help to improve your overall health and wellbeing, while reducing your chances of future episodes.

LBP can be caused by a combination of physical and psychological factors, a physiotherapist may be able to advise on these and how to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

The biopsychosocial approach

Chronic LBP can be associated with feelings of depression, poor lifestyle habits, and difficulties taking part in work and social activities. Different healthcare professionals, including physiotherapists, work together to help with these different aspects of LBP. They can use what is known as a biopsychosocial approach, and will look at these three factors:



Biological: the physical aspects of your LBP

Psychological: the emotional and mental impact of your LBP, how you are coping with it, your stress levels, and how you perceive your pain, eg if you are scared of doing further damage



Social: this can include your family life, what support you have, the things you have access to, eg places to exercise and/or walk safely, where you work and what you do for a living

The role of self-management for low back pain

Self-management and exercise are the **most recommended** treatments for managing LBP. Your physiotherapist will help you develop a self-management programme that works for you.

This may include:

- a plan to put you in **control of your pain** and get you back to living well again
- provide you with **confidence to trust your back** again. Your **spine is strong**. Although movements may be painful at first, they will get better as you gradually regain mobility and get active again
- how to **overcome a fear of movement and injury**, or not getting better, eg with a therapy such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- understanding that most LBP is **not serious**
- understanding the **importance of sleep** in tackling LBP
- how to **manage stress** and stressful situations that may be contributing to your LBP
- being **physically active**
- **not smoking** tobacco
- being engaged in **social and work** activities
- making **ergonomic adjustments** in the workplace, if required



Talk to a physiotherapist about how to best manage your low back pain



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