

# Back Pain Check-In

## 7 things to notice before your next appointment

Back pain can change from day to day. Noticing a few simple patterns can make it easier to explain what you are experiencing and help your healthcare practitioner understand what may be influencing it. You don't need to work out the cause yourself — just notice what your body is telling you.

1 **Where do you feel it?**

Lower back, one side, both sides, buttock, hip, leg — or somewhere else?

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2 **When do you notice it most?**

First thing in the morning? After sitting, standing, walking, bending, driving or at the end of the day?

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3 **What makes it feel better?**

Movement, changing position, walking, lying down, heat, rest — or nothing obvious?

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4 **What seems to aggravate it?**

Long periods of sitting, lifting, twisting, exercise, coughing or particular movements?

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5 **Does the pain travel?**

Does it stay in your back, or move into your buttock, thigh, leg or foot?

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6 **Is anything else happening with it?**

For example: pins and needles, numbness, weakness, stiffness, disturbed sleep or changes in how you move.

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7 **What do you want to be able to do again?**

Walk comfortably? Exercise? Sit through work? Sleep better? Lift your child? Return to sport?

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### Worth mentioning promptly

Tell your healthcare practitioner if your symptoms are changing significantly, becoming progressively worse, repeatedly disturbing your sleep, or you develop new weakness, numbness or other symptoms that concern you.

Take this with you — or use it to jot down a few notes before your next appointment.

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#### In The Waiting Room

General health information only. This resource is designed to help you notice and communicate your symptoms and does not diagnose the cause of back pain. Your healthcare practitioner remains the point of care.