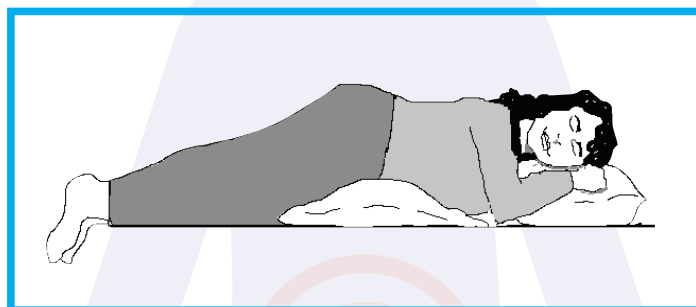
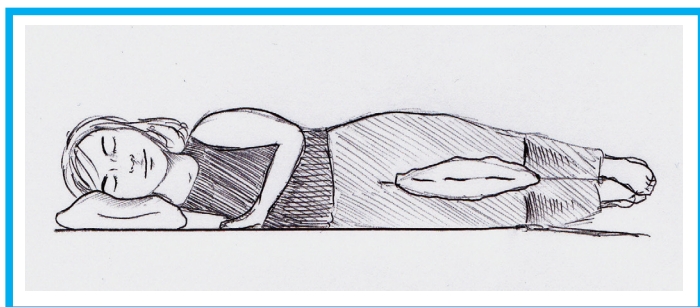
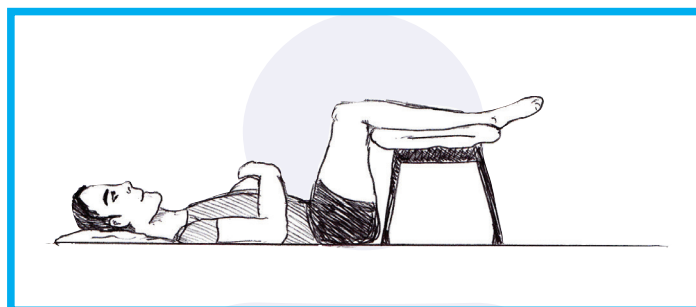
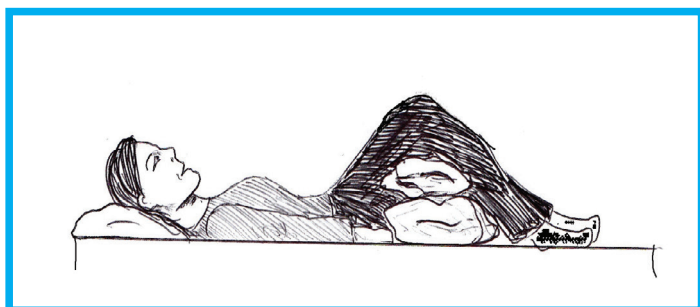


Advice for Managing Back Pain

LBP1

It may be useful to try these positions when you are resting or to sleep at night.



Keep active

- Generally it is best for you to try to keep as active as possible in the day.
- Try to maintain as much of your normal daily routine as you can whilst managing this problem.
- Try not to stay in one position for too long.

Medication can be a very useful part of managing your back pain.

- It can help you to maintain gentle activity and daily routine.
- Taking your pain killers regularly, as prescribed, is likely to help relieve symptoms and enable a quicker return to normal activities.
- You can seek further advice from your GP or local pharmacist.

Use of heat or cold

- Heat or cold can help to decrease pain and muscle spasm
- You may need to test both of these to see which one gives you the best relief
- Mild heat – hot pack or hot water bottle wrapped in a towel, put over your back for about 20 minutes.
- Cold – ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a towel, on for about 20 minutes.
- Remember that both heat and cold can burn your skin. Make sure you check that you can feel the temperature and check your skin.
- These can be used when in a resting position.
- You may get extra benefit if you use either of these before or after your exercises.

Posture

- The spine has natural curves that support your body
- When we are in pain we tend to adopt positions that don't always support these curves.
- This can cause you problems later.
- Try to keep your back supported to maintain these natural curves by keeping your ears, shoulders and hips in line.
- When sitting you may need a small cushion behind your back to give added support.

Here are some other ideas to help you manage your back problem:

- Try not to do too much bending or stooping – e.g. watch your posture while you are brushing your teeth, vacuuming or washing up.
- Be aware of the different heights of workstations, ironing boards, sinks and basins that may encourage you to stoop.
- Try not to over-stretch - move closer to the object or organise shelves so that everyday items are easy to reach
- Try not to over-twist - step round and alter your foot position
- Use appropriate equipment e.g. steps and ladders to reach objects and trolleys to move them.
- For low level activities bend your knees or kneel down.
- When travelling for a long time, take regular breaks and stretch.
- Showering puts less pressure on your back than sitting in a bath.
- Try to wash your hair in the shower rather than washing it over the bath
- Sit down to put on/take off socks and shoes
- Stand straight and bend your knee to put items over your feet e.g. trousers
- When looking after children, encourage them to climb up rather than lifting. Dress children when they are standing on the bed or sit them on the stairs.
- It is best to try to keep as active as possible during the day – try not to stay in one position for too long
- Gradually increase your activity when you return to work/daily activity/sport after a period off.
- If returning to work after a prolonged time off you may need to discuss a phased return with your managers so that you can build up to your usual tasks over an agreed time period.