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2. .Advocating information therapy
3. rk ofSetting up a national netwo .atient education centers
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HEALTH EDUCATION LIBRARY FOR PEOPLE

Backache



**LET'S HELP
ERADICATE
IGNORANCE**

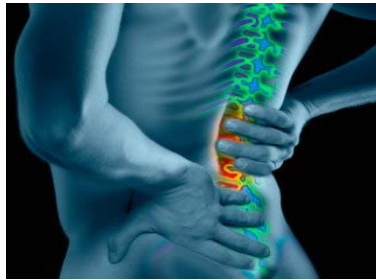
**Understanding Backache and
Its Treatment**

Backache

Back pain can range from a dull, constant ache to a sudden, sharp pain that makes it hard to move. It can start quickly if you fall or lift something too heavy, or it can get worse slowly.

Causes:

- Getting older. Back pain is more common the older you get. You may first have back pain when you are 30 to 40 years old.
- Poor physical fitness. Back pain is more common in people who are not fit.
- Being overweight. A diet high in calories and fat can make you gain weight. Too much weight can stress the back and cause pain.
- Heredity. Some causes of back pain, such as ankylosing spondylitis, a form of arthritis that affects the spine, can have a genetic component.
- Other diseases. Some types of arthritis and cancer can cause back pain.
- Your job. If you have to lift, push, or pull while twisting your spine, you may get back pain. If you work at a desk all day and do not sit up straight, you may also get back pain.
- Smoking. Your body may not be able to get enough nutrients to the disks in your back if you smoke. Smoker's cough may also cause back pain. People who smoke are slow to heal, so back pain may last longer.



Treatment: Treatment for back pain depends on what kind of pain you have. Acute back pain usually gets better without any treatment, but you may want to take acetaminophen, aspirin, or ibuprofen to help ease the pain. Exercise and surgery are not usually used to treat acute back pain.

Following are some types of treatments for chronic back pain.

* Hot or Cold Packs (or Both)

Hot or cold packs can soothe sore, stiff backs. Heat reduces muscle spasms and pain. Cold helps reduce swelling and numbs deep pain. Using hot or cold packs may relieve pain, but this treatment does not fix the cause of chronic back pain.

* Exercise

Proper exercise can help ease chronic pain but should not be used for acute back pain. Your doctor or physical therapist can tell you the best types of exercise to do.

*Behavior Changes

You can learn to lift, push, and pull with less stress on your back. Changing how you exercise, relax, and sleep can help lessen back pain. Eating a healthy diet and not smoking also help.

*Injections

Your doctor may suggest steroid or numbing shots to lessen your pain.

Call your doctor if you experience:-

- Numbness or tingling
- Severe pain that does not improve with rest
- Pain after a fall or an injury
- Pain plus any of these problems:
 - Trouble urinating
 - Weakness
 - Numbness in your legs
 - Fever
 - Weight loss when not on a diet.

