

THE 5 BIGGEST MISTAKES MADE BY LOW BACK PAIN AND SCIATICA SUFFERERS

The 5 biggest mistakes made by low back pain and sciatica sufferers

Low back pain is now thought to be the leading cause of disability in the world and will affect 80% of the population at some point through their lives. It is also the most common condition people present with at The Chiropractic Centre.

We see a lot of patterns in how people are self-diagnosing and managing their back pain, so I wanted to tackle the 5 most common mistakes people make when it comes to their low back pain and sciatica.

1 Using a heat pack

We see this one a lot. Most people reach for the hot water bottle when their back starts to play up, and often it gives relief. So what's wrong with it?

Typically the pain associated with back pain is due to a build up of inflammation in a nerve, joint or muscle, often all three. Inflammation causes heat. So when you put heat on inflammation you are adding fire to fire. Naturally heat feels comforting, which is why people find relief in it but it is actually encouraging the problem.

Using an ice pack doesn't give the soothing relief of heat but it does help reduce the heat and inflammation in your back. As the inflammation reduces so do the pain levels.

So try an ice pack wrapped in a thin towel and place it on your low back for 15 minutes and repeat 3 times throughout the day.

2 Thinking they have normal low back pain

We often hear people say that they have 'normal' low back pain. A lot of this belief comes down to the fact that low back pain is prevalent. If it will affect 80% of the population during their lifetime, isn't it normal to affect you too?

The first thing to clarify is that there is a difference between something being normal and something being common. Low back pain is definitely common, and we all know family and friends who are affected, but it isn't normal. Pain anywhere in your body is your brain trying to communicate that there is something wrong.



If the engine light in your car starts flashing you don't ignore it, you take your car to a mechanic to diagnose the problem. Essentially pain is your body's warning light that something is not right.

3 Don't do exercises if it hurts

Often when their back starts hurting people stop exercising and doing most things. Thankfully the out-dated concept of bed rest has mostly gone, but you still need to keep moving more when out of bed.

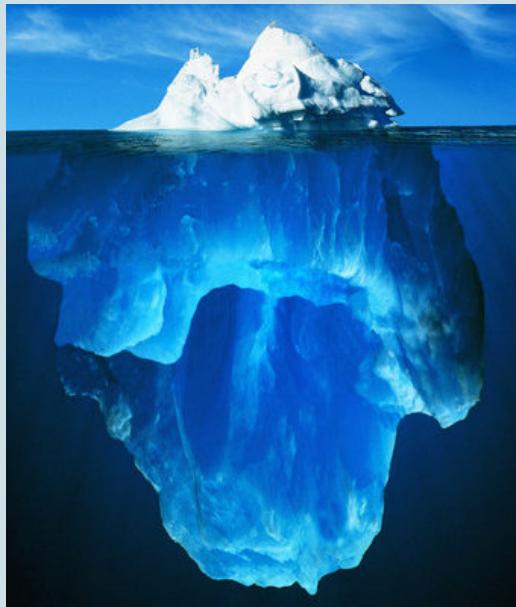
Our body is designed to move, and that's when your back is feeling good or in pain. We're not telling you to go out and break your own records at the gym, but it is vitally important to keep moving regularly and stretching to stop your back tightening up.

4 My back pain only started 3 weeks ago

When you start feeling the pain in your back and when the problem started are often two very different dates. Unless you fell down the stairs or were involved in a car accident low back pain is a gradual process. Usually down to regularly,

mini traumas from posture or stress issues build up in the spine. The body is very good at adapting and compensating for these problems until one day when it can't cope any more and your low back pain starts from seemingly doing nothing - the straw that broke the camels back. Often there are warnings of its coming, niggles in the back or pain that goes relatively quickly but the underlying complaint grows under the surface until it becomes too big.

Think of it like an iceberg, you can only see 10-20% of the iceberg above the surface - this is what you feel, your symptoms. Underneath the surface is 80-90% and that's the underlying problem that's causing the symptoms. That's the area we work on at The Chiropractic Centre.



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If I wait the problem will go

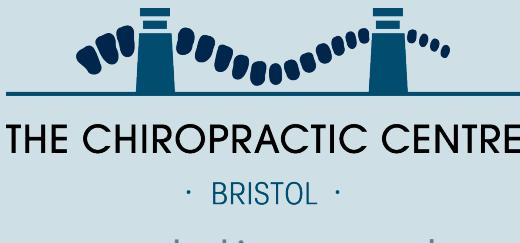
In part this is true, if you wait - the symptoms may go, but as we've highlighted already the problem is not the symptoms but the process that is happening under the surface.

When we take x-rays of the spine we find they say a loud clear message. Although the pain may come and go the problem under the surface has been present for years and is not going away. This is when we see

people in their 30s with the arthritis levels of someone in their 70s.

So don't ignore your pain, listen to the warning signs of your body telling you to sort the problem out. Get checked by a Chiropractor this week. If you're near one of our centres book in to see one of our excellent Chiropractors, details below, as in my biased opinion you will be looked after better than anywhere else.

And remember, if you do nothing about your back then this moment now is the healthiest it will ever be!



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