

BACK PAIN PREVENTION

Back pain can be the result of trauma, such as a fall or a car accident. But most often back pain is the result of an everyday activity done incorrectly. The good news is that back pain prevention isn't all that difficult, often requiring just a few adjustments that will soon become second nature.

1 One of the most important things you can do for back pain prevention is to get up and get moving. Muscles are meant to move. If you aren't in good shape, you're more likely to hurt your back and feel pain when you do even simple movements. Also, exercise helps keep your joints fluid. Another reason exercise prevents back pain is that exercise helps you keep your weight down – being overweight, especially around your stomach, can put added **strain** on your back. A regular and varied exercise program can **ease** pain and **stiffness**, strengthen muscles and bones and improve flexibility.

2 If you maintain good eating habits, you not only will maintain a healthy weight, but you also will not put unnecessary **stress** on your body. A **steady** diet of excessively spicy or fast food can strain your nervous system, which is going to create back problems. If your intestines are working and functioning properly, that will maintain your spine because your inside and your outside relate to one another. Also, getting enough calcium and vitamin can help keep bones strong and reduce your risk of osteoporosis, which can lead to painful and sometimes debilitating fractures of the vertebrae.

3 You don't want to sleep flat on your back. The best position for sleeping is on your side. If you must sleep on your stomach, put a pillow under your lower abdomen to help **take** stress **off** your back. Having a supportive mattress and pillow for your head are vital as well. Getting enough, restful sleep is always an important part of maintaining good health. Also, if you exercise during the day, you sleep better at night.

4 Knowing the right way to sit, stand, walk and lift can help prevent back pain. Poor habits such as **slouching** or **hunching** over a desk can put tension on the spine. People slouch over their computers and their telephones when they're texting, and they don't realize the damage they're doing to their backs and the pain they could be causing. Be sure to work at an ergonomically correct workstation, both at the office and at home, and break up long periods in front of the computer with stretching exercises. If you practice good posture, you will maintain the natural curves of your back and help keep it strong.

5 You probably don't realize how much stress can impact your back health. Stress causes you to tense your muscles, and constant **tension** of this kind can cause back pain. Any activity that helps you reduce stress will help prevent back pain. Stress reduction activities can include yoga, meditation, biofeedback, deep breathing, tai chi, and guided imagery.

6 It's well known that smoking raises your risk for heart disease and cancer, including lung and colon cancers, but most people don't realize that smoking also can be a cause of **persistent** back pain. Research also shows smoking can make existing back pain worse. It's not entirely clear how smoking affects back health, but one possibility is that it narrows blood vessels. Narrowed blood vessels result in less oxygen and nutrients reaching the spine and, in turn, it becomes more susceptible to injury and slower to heal.

1. Read the article and match the titles to the paragraphs.

- A - Eating for healthy body
- B - Maintain proper posture
- C - Exercise
- D - Quit smoking
- E - Reduce stress
- F - Sleep sideways

2. Look at the words **in bold**, think about their meaning and create pairs of synonyms – words having the same or nearly the same meaning.

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3. Complete the gaps with the highlighted verbs.

- A good posture refers to the that are present in a healthy spine.
- These changes to create favourable conditions for the proper development of children.
- The new rules should protect people from the health and safety risks of long working hours and insufficient rest.
- Diabetes, cancer, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, heart failure, lung failure – things that we know are diseases, for which there's relatively little that can be done.

4. Check how much you remember. Answer the questions:

- a. Which nutrients can reduce the risks of osteoporosis ?
- b. Why do narrowed blood vessels cause injury and slower healing ?

5. In pairs discuss what advice to give to someone suffering from back pain.

Bibliography:

6 Tips to Prevent Back Pain, Beth W. Orenstein, [online], [dostęp 2 kwiecień 2017], dostępny w internecie: <http://www.everydayhealth.com/pain-management/back-pain/quick-tips-to-help-prevent-back-pain.aspx>

Preventing Back Pain, [online], [dostęp 2 kwiecień 2017], dostępny w internecie: <http://www.arthritis.org/about-arthritis/where-it-hurts/back-pain/back-care/back-pain-prevention.php>

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