



# Ascension

# Injury Prevention

## of the Month

## Low Back Pain

Low back pain due to overload from stretching or lifting is one of the most common injuries in the workforce. Severe cases, such as chronic low back pain spanning several months and years, that are not effectively treated can lead to degenerative disc and bone issues effecting quality of life into retirement and beyond.

### CAUSES OF BACK PAIN

Most of us experience lower back pain at some point in our lives. It becomes most common between ages 30-50. It is the most common neurological ailment in America, second only to headaches.





<p><b>AGE</b> We lose bone strength and muscle flexibility.</p> 	<p><b>ARTHRITIS</b> Deteriorating collagen and cartilage cause stiffness and pain.</p> 
<p><b>OBSESITY/WEIGHT GAIN</b> Extra pounds compress the spine.</p> 	<p><b>POOR WORKING POSTURE</b> Habitually bad posture "trains" the stack of vertebrae to be misaligned.</p> 

Image Credit: tezytalknutrition.com



### Preventing Low Back Pain

- Perform a power squat with upright head and chest
- Keep objects close to body
- Get help for heavy lifts
- Wear comfortable/supportive shoes
- Exercise/stretch regularly
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Quit smoking: *Smoking* ↓ *blood supply to the low back* and ↑ *the rate of disk deterioration*


## Initial Treatment

- ✓ Have the area evaluated if pain lasts more than 3 days!
- ✓ Rest by decreasing strenuous activity and weight bearing activities
- ✓ Ice the location for 20 minutes 3-4 times per day to help with swelling and pain. Heat can be used as well to help relax and loosen musculature
- ✓ NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) like ibuprofen or naproxen may be used to decrease pain and limit swelling. \*Always take as directed on the label or as instructed by your physician




### Back Pain Facts


Back pain is one of the **most common work-related injuries** and is often caused by ordinary work activities such as sitting in an office chair, or lifting heavy items.




**Leaning forward 30 degrees** in an attempt to get closer to the computer screen **puts 3 to 4 times more strain on the back.**



Experts estimate that **80%** of the population will experience back pain throughout their lifetime.



According to the NIH, a **lumbar support cushion** properly placed behind the small of the back can help to accentuate lumbar support.



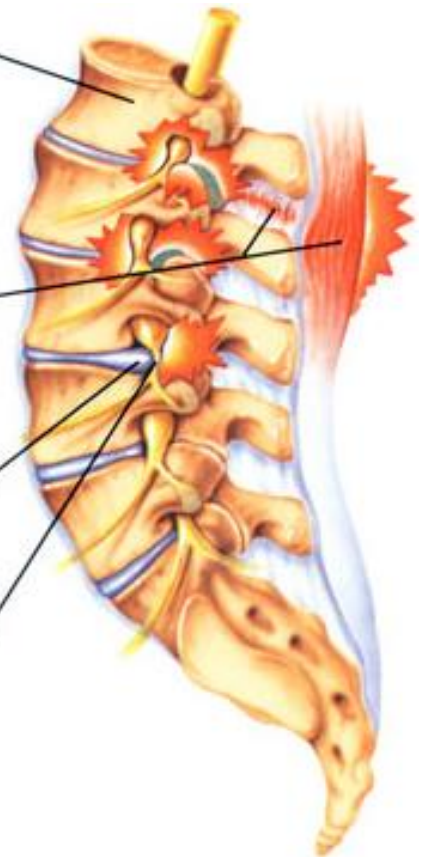
At least **50%** of working Americans admit to having back pain symptoms **annually.**

**Vertebrae** are bones that protect your spinal cord. They can be forced or locked out of their proper positions (**mis-aligned**).

**Ligaments and muscles** are supportive tissues that can be stretched, torn, or weakened.

**Discs** are shock absorbers that can bulge, rupture, or wear down.

**Nerves**, which carry the body's messages, can get stretched, pinched, or irritated.



### Contact for more information:

Seth Kuhn, MHA, LAT, CSCS: [Seth.Kuhn@ascension.org](mailto:Seth.Kuhn@ascension.org) | Traci Tauferner, LAT, CSCS, PES: [Traci.Tauferner@ascension.org](mailto:Traci.Tauferner@ascension.org)

Resources: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/10265-back-strains-and-sprains>

<https://www.webmd.com/back-pain/guide/low-back-strain#1>;

[https://www.google.com/search?q=back+pain+spine&rlz=1C1GGRV\\_enUS783US783&source=lnms&tbnm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj4l6mU6LfZAhXSu1MKHVWCDVQQ\\_AUICigB&biw=1600&bih=769#imgrc=U8-rWGfHnGFem:](https://www.google.com/search?q=back+pain+spine&rlz=1C1GGRV_enUS783US783&source=lnms&tbnm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj4l6mU6LfZAhXSu1MKHVWCDVQQ_AUICigB&biw=1600&bih=769#imgrc=U8-rWGfHnGFem:)