

Editorial Note on Spine Research- Backache

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Backache is one of the most common medical complaints, particularly among adults. Backache usually refers to pain in your muscles, intervertebral joints, spinal nerves, or sometimes bone-on-bone pain. The type of pain you are having can help your physician pinpoint the cause. Most sources of backache are not life threatening. Some spinal column disorders can put pressure on the nerves of the spinal cord for serious symptoms of nerve compression, such as loss of sensation in the limbs or shoulders; a complete loss of balance; loss of bladder or bowel control, especially in combination with weakness in your legs; or loss of sensation in a limb. Also seek immediate care for serious symptoms, such as abnormal sensations or sudden weakness or numbness on one side of your body, paralysis, and changes in level of consciousness. Backache may accompany other symptoms that vary depending on the underlying disease, disorder or condition. Symptoms that frequently affect the back may also involve other body systems. Backache is one of the most common medical complaints, particularly among adults. Backache usually refers to pain in your muscles, intervertebral joints, spinal nerves, or sometimes bone-on-bone pain. The type of pain you are having can help your physician pinpoint the cause.

Backache can be categorized as acute or chronic. Acute pain is often temporary and can improve on its own, frequently without treatment or with the assistance of a mild pain relieving medication. Acute backache usually lasts anywhere from a couple of days to several weeks. Chronic back pain is more long- term and can extend beyond several months. The pain can often be progressive, getting worse over time.

Once your medical practitioner determines the cause of the pain, there are usually appropriate treatments either to relieve the symptoms or to eliminate the pain source altogether. With appropriate treatment, your backache can often be resolved or managed with strategies that enable you to resume most of your normal activities

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Musculoskeletal symptoms that may occur along with backache may accompany other symptoms affecting the musculoskeletal system including:

- Buttock or hip pain
- Curvature of the spine
- "Foot drop" (feeling of the foot slapping the ground; caused by leg weakness)
- Heel pain
- Muscle spasm
- Muscle weakness
- Neck pain and stiffness
- Shoulder pain
- Stiffness in the spine
- Swelling in the shoulder, knee, or ankle joints