

Bendy Backs

8 out of 10 of us will experience back pain at some point in our lives, so how can we avoid it?

Some of the many triggers for back pain can be long periods of sitting down, bending awkwardly or lifting objects incorrectly. Most cases aren't caused by anything serious and can get better within a couple of weeks, but if your pain is severe or improving after a week or so then you will need to go to your doctor.

Prevention is better than the cure and back pain can be avoided by strengthening up some key areas of the body. It is often weakness or a lack of flexibility that brings about the movements that lead to pain.

Find Support

NHS help and advice - www.nhs.uk/conditions/back-pain/

How to sit correctly - www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/how-to-sit-correctly/

Improve your posture - www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/common-posture-mistakes-and-fixes/

Speak to LifeWorks

You can contact the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) from a UK landline or a mobile with **FREE** contract minutes on **0800 069 8854**.

For online support, you can visit the LifeWorks website. www.coop.lifeworks.com



The best thing you can do is to stay active, here are some exercises you can do to protect your back

- **Ease the tension** - contrary to beliefs when you have lower back pain, more is better with regards to physical activity as it can help ease the pain. If your sat at a desk all day, try shoulder shrugs to ease some tension, or if you job is more active try stretching out your lower back by pushing your pelvis outwards
- **Practice good posture** - it will make sure you use the correct muscles when you are sitting, standing, lifting, driving or just walking. Sit upright with your shoulders pulled back and your ears over your shoulders
- **Stand up** - when sitting for hours at a time, this puts pressure on your spine and discs. Stand up as often as your work allows throughout the day and move around to ease the pressure
- **Drink healthy fluids** - your body is around 70% water, so keeping hydrated will keep your bendy back fluid and flexible

