

Back pain - quiz

Test your knowledge on back pain with our quick health quiz, and read tips to prevent and treat a bad back.

1. How often do you exercise?

- A. Four or more days of the week.
- B. Once a week.
- C. Not at all, or hardly ever.

2. Are you currently at a healthy weight?

- A. No, I'm obese.
- B. Perhaps a few kilos overweight.
- C. I'm maintaining a healthy weight for my height.

3. Suppose you have to carry a heavy backpack. Which way do you carry it?

- A. By the straps, alternating hands to prevent fatigue.
- B. On my back with a strap over each shoulder.
- C. Slung over one shoulder, alternating shoulders to prevent fatigue.

4. How do you lift a heavy object?

- A. I squat down, hold the object close to my body, lift with my thighs and keep my back straight.
- B. I bend over at the waist, grasp the object and straighten up.
- C. I squat down, hold the object close, and stand up by straightening my legs and body at the same time.

5. What's your posture like after you've been sitting down for a while?

- A. My back is straight and my bottom is towards the back of the seat.
- B. My shoulders are rounded a little and my legs may be crossed at the knee.
- C. My bottom is resting on the front of the seat, my back is slumped and my head is craned forward.

6. Do you regularly perform stretching exercises to boost your flexibility?

- A. No, or hardly ever.
- B. Yes, but only as part of my warm-up and cool-down for sporting activities.
- C. Yes, I regularly stretch at least twice per week.

7. What's your mattress like?

- A. Soft - my bottom sinks lower into the mattress than the rest of my body.
- B. Firm - my shoulders and hips sink to about the same degree when lying on my side.
- C. Hard - in fact, lying on my mattress feels like lying on the floor.

Calculate score

Your score is:

Score 7 to 11:

If you're not already suffering from chronic back pain, you will be soon. Your lifestyle habits are putting your back under unnecessary strain.

Score 12 to 16:

Some of your lifestyle choices could be increasing your risk of injury. Making a few changes here and there could dramatically reduce your experience of back pain.

Score 17 to 21:

Your healthy lifestyle choices are significantly reducing your risk of injury and chronic pain. Congratulations, you are taking good care of your back.

> Check the best answers.

This page has been produced in consultation with, and approved by:

Australian Rheumatology Association (Vic Branch)

This Better Health Channel fact sheet has passed through a rigorous approval process. The information provided was accurate at the time of publication and is not intended to take the place of medical advice. Please seek advice from a qualified health care professional.

For the latest updates and more information, visit www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Copyright © 1999/2010 State of Victoria. Reproduced from the Better Health Channel (www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) at no cost with permission of the Victorian Minister for Health. Unauthorised reproduction and other uses comprised in the copyright are prohibited without permission.