

OH MY ACHING BACK!!

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At any given time about 25 percent of people in the U.S. report having low back pain within the last three months. A study published in Spine 2008, reported 92 percent found physical therapy helped their low back pain. In most cases low back pain is mild and disappears on its own. For some people however, back pain can return or hang on, leading to a decrease in quality of life or even disability.

If your low back pain is accompanied by the following symptoms, you should visit your local emergency department immediately:

- **Loss of bowel or bladder control**
- **Numbness in the groin or inner thigh**

These symptoms might indicate a condition called “cauda equina syndrome,” in which nerves at the end of the spinal cord are being compressed.

The signs and symptoms of low back pain vary a great deal. Your pain might be dull, burning, or sharp. You might feel it at a single point or over a broad area. It might be accompanied by muscle spasm or stiffness. Sometimes it might spread into one or both legs.

Often, low back pain occurs due to overuse, strain, or injury. It could be caused by too much bending, twisting, lifting or too much sitting. Poor posture or prolonged faulty positioning can cause low back pain.

Although low back pain is rarely serious or life threatening, it can be very painful and limiting you from very basic activities of daily living. There are several conditions that may contribute to low back pain, such as:

- Degenerative Disk (s)
- Lumbar spinal stenosis
- Fractures
- Herniated Disk Disk(s)
- Osteoarthritis
- Osteoporosis
- Tumors of the Spine

At Lake Country Physical Therapy and Sportscare, PC we provide a **very thorough evaluation to identify the source of your pain** including tests to identify signs or symptoms that could indicate serious health problems such as broken bones or cancer. If we suspect your low back pain might be caused by a serious health condition we will refer you to your primary care physician or a specialist for imaging tests such as x-rays, CT scans or MRI. For most low back pain, imaging tests are not needed for identifying the cause of your pain. As you may already know from reading our previous articles waiting more than 3 to

5 days can lead to more recovery time and as a result, in more money spent. **Early intervention speeds recovery.** Our focus on **managing your pain** is a first priority so movement is tolerable. We will use pain reflex release technique (PRRT, pronounced PERT) a specialized, gentle hands on manual therapy that quickly breaks the pain cycle. Using PRRT, 50 percent resolution of pain is expected and frequently found by the end of the first session. The techniques are quick, effective, gentle and involve tapping, flicking and touching - often far from the painful trigger region. Other manual therapy techniques such as joint mobilization and manipulation may also be used to restore alignment and break your pain cycle.

Once your pain is under control, specific mobility, flexibility and strengthening **exercise will be instructed** along with **training of proper lifting, bending, sleeping and sitting** and for chores both at home and at work. **We emphasize teaching you how to take care of yourself and how to prevent injury or reoccurrence of your low back pain.**

For more information about Lake Country Physical Therapy and SportsCare, PC, please call (585) 396-1400, email Zoe@lakecountrypt.com, Robert@lakecountrypt.com or visit us at www.lakecountrypt.com.