

# RECOVERY FROM BACK PAIN

## What to Expect Once Home from the Hospital

At home, you may experience mild to moderate discomfort, stiffness, or reduced mobility. These are common and usually improve over time with self-care and activity modification.



## Recovering at Home

Here's what you can do to support your recovery:

### • Stay Active

Avoid complete bed rest. Light activity like walking helps keep joints flexible and muscles strong. Rest in short periods is okay but don't stay inactive for long.

### • Heat and Ice

- Use ice packs for the first 24–48 hours to reduce swelling.
- Use heat packs after the initial inflammation subsides to relax muscles and improve blood flow.

### • Modify Activities

Avoid bending, twisting, or lifting heavy objects. Use proper techniques if lifting is necessary—bend at the knees, not the waist.

### • Stretch and Strengthen

Gentle stretching may relieve tight muscles. Core strengthening exercises support the spine. Ask your provider or physiotherapist for safe options.

### • Supportive Seating

Sit with your back supported and feet flat on the floor. Avoid soft, low chairs and long periods of sitting.

### • Sleep Position

Use a supportive mattress. Try sleeping on your side with a pillow between your knees, or on your back with a pillow under your knees.

## Pain Management

Managing pain effectively helps support healing.

### • Medications

Over-the-counter pain relievers like **Acetaminophen (Tylenol)**: Relieves pain but not inflammation

### **Ibuprofen (Advil, Nurofen) or Naproxen**

**(Aleve)**: Reduce inflammation and pain

Follow dosage instructions and talk to your doctor if you need them for more than a few days.



## • **Topical Treatments**

Creams or patches with menthol, capsaicin, or NSAIDs can provide targeted relief.

## • **Physical Therapy**

If pain persists, your doctor may recommend physiotherapy. Therapists can guide you through exercises and manual techniques to restore mobility and strength.

## • **Massage & Bodywork**

Gentle massage can reduce muscle tension. Avoid deep tissue massage in acute pain phases without medical advice.



# When to Seek Medical Help

Contact your healthcare provider or go to the Emergency Room if you experience:

- Severe, unrelenting pain
- Pain that radiates down one or both legs
- Numbness, tingling, or weakness in the legs
- Difficulty controlling your bladder or bowel
- Sudden, unexplained weight loss
- Fever along with back pain.



## FAQs

### Some Common Questions about Recovery from Back Pain

#### **Q: When can I return to work or physical activity?**

**A:** Most people can return to light activities within a few days. Heavy physical work may require more recovery time. Always follow your provider's advice.

#### **Q: Should I stay in bed if my back hurts?**

**A:** No. Prolonged bed rest can actually make back pain worse. Gentle movement and staying active are key parts of recovery.

#### **Q: Is back pain a sign of something serious?**

**A:** Back pain is usually not caused by a serious condition, but if symptoms worsen or new symptoms develop (like numbness or weakness), seek medical attention promptly.