



RETIREE BENEFITS

News

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Stay in control and strike back at pain

Back pain is no small thing. Sometimes one minor tweak to your back and you could be down for the count, taking you away from things you like to do. Luckily there are lots of ways to help prevent back pain and options to relieve those sore, achy muscles if you accidentally overwork them.

Lower back pain

Did you know about 80% of people have issues with their lower back at least once, with pain ranging from a minor nuisance to a major disability? When you're living with severe pain, you might think about getting a prescription. But clinical guidelines recommend avoiding medications as the initial treatment for low back pain. Back pain is a driver of opioid prescriptions in the U.S., and opioid usage comes with possible (and unnecessary) risks of addiction and potential complications. Instead, you may first want to try exercises and therapies you can do on your own or with the help of a professional.

Eight tips to help prevent and treat back pain

Check in with your posture right now. Are you hunched over like a turtle? Loosen up those shoulders and roll them down your back. That's a start, but let's get into more detail with these eight tips:

1. Focus on posture
2. Stay active
3. Ice first, then bring on the heat
4. Try treatment
5. Eat a healthier diet
6. Lift carefully
7. Take breaks
8. Stretch

Got your back workouts in?

Nice work. Now, here's a pro tip for the rest of your day. Support your weight with your abdominal muscle as you walk, stand and sit. (No leaning.) Your daily mantra could be: *Belly in tight, sit upright.*

Who should I see if I have concerns about back pain?

If you're experiencing severe back pain, or you have other related concerns, there are plenty of experts to see for help. For example, you could visit a chiropractor, physical therapist, occupational therapist and/or acupuncturist.

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