

# The 7 Big Back Pain Mistakes

## You are Probably Making in Managing Your Back Pain, And What You Can Do to Avoid Them

### Back-ground

I'm sure it is no surprise to you that lower back pain is one of the most common medical problems, with more than **5 million people in Australia**, or **a quarter of the population**, suffering with this condition<sup>1</sup>. Yet the majority of people with lower back pain don't get the right treatment when they seek help.



Research by The George Institute for International Health shows **80 per cent of people with back pain were not treated in accordance with current guidelines**<sup>2</sup>, and **more than a third of Australians who injure their back are still in pain one year on**<sup>3</sup>.

Researchers at the Institute say a more holistic approach is needed to alleviate the problem and reduce the high rates of recurrence. "We tend to treat the pain when it's there, but when you recover, patients rarely take steps to prevent the problem from returning," says Professor Chris Maher, director of musculoskeletal research in Sydney.<sup>4</sup>

### How To Get Results

To get good results with your back problem, your therapist must look at 4 areas.

1. **The alignment of the back.** If the chassis of your car is uneven, and your tyres are wearing out, it is no good just replacing the tyres all the time. In the same way, if your back is out of alignment, it will create uneven pressure in some parts of your back, and eventually something will start to play up. It is important to remember that **bones** are static, and **are moved by muscles**. If your bones are out of position, it is usually because your muscles have pulled them there. If the muscles at the front of your shoulder are much tighter than the ones at the back, your shoulder will be pulled forward, creating a lot of uneven pressure around it.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.medicalsearch.com.au/News/Fed-Five-million-Australians-have-back-pain-research-36162>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.medicalsearch.com.au/News/People-with-back-pain-are-often-given-wrong-treatment-43010>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.medicalsearch.com.au/News/FedBack-pain-recovery-slow-for-a-third-of-Aussies-rpt-33207>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.medicalsearch.com.au/News/Fed-Five-million-Australians-have-back-pain-research-36162>

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Just like a car with its chassis out of alignment, this will cause problems to develop in the area. (Structurally, the lower back is very complex. There are at least 77 muscles in your back, and nearly all of them play some role in the proper alignment and functioning of your back.)

2. **Any repetitive activity.** Doing **too much of one type of activity** will make the muscles that are being used all the time bigger and stronger, while the ones that aren't being used much will get smaller. (This includes carrying a bag on one side only.) Over time, this will create uneven pressure on joints and shift your spine, hips or other bones out of alignment. **Not enough variety** in your movements will have much the same effect, e.g. sitting at a desk all day will use some muscles and not others. **To have a good back, it is important for it to have a wide variety of movements regularly.** (Unfortunately, bodybuilders don't normally exercise each muscle that looks after their back, so often develop problems.) Walking over uneven ground that varies in slope and angle is often very good for many back problems, as it uses many more muscles than just walking on flat ground, so no group of muscles get favoured over others.
3. **Repair mechanisms.** Is the body able to quickly and easily repair any small problems before they become big ones? **Degeneration occurs when the body's repair systems aren't keeping up the problem.** Is there enough blood supply to the area? (Hint- if heat helps the pain, then probably not!) Any muscles that are lacking in oxygen and nutrients, and are full of wastes, will tend to become very tight. Inflammation is part of the body's repair system, but is there still inflammation long after there should be? Is there enough Zinc and Vitamin C getting to the damaged area for them to heal? Is a lack of Magnesium causing the muscles to be too tight? Is stress causing too much tension in a particular area and not allowing it to heal?
4. **Internal causes.** If the problem is long-term, we have to look a little deeper in the body. Very few people realise that **internal organs not working properly can often cause structural imbalances.** For example, if your liver is congested, the muscles over the liver (below the right shoulder blade) will often become tight, causing tension in the right neck and shoulder and in the left lower back. (This can be a common cause of sciatic problems, especially left-sided sciatic.)

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### 1. Continuing to do what doesn't work

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If you have been to a therapist for many treatments, or been stretching and exercising for some time, and have had no improvement, stop! **You need to find the real reason for your pain or you could be making things worse.** You need to understand exactly how your body is out of balance. For example, if your pelvis is incorrectly aligned, your spine will follow and will go into an abnormal curve, such as scoliosis. Treating the spine in this case will not produce good, long-term benefits, unless you treat the pelvis as well.

### **Why Your Stretching and Exercises Aren't Giving You Relief**

The goal of any stretching and exercise program is to balance the body. You need to know which muscle groups are tight, which muscle groups are weak and how those imbalances are affecting your body as a whole. If a muscle group is too strong or too tight and your bones are pulled out of their proper position, eventually your joints will not work correctly, and will suffer increased wear and tear until movements become painful.

As an example, if you have tight hamstrings (the muscles at the back of the thighs), this could be caused by **your pelvis being pulled or tipped forward** by tight muscles in the **front** of your legs. If you have been stretching your hamstrings, this will lengthen them and allow your pelvis to tip forward even more!

If you have back pain and want to do a balanced workout, you need to know what muscle groups needs stretching and strengthening for YOUR body, rather than general stretches given to an entire group of people. It's true that Yoga and Pilates are all about balance, however **these classes are for those who do not have a problem.** For someone with back pain due to muscle imbalances, a general stretching and exercise program may not be helping, and **may possibly be making the problem worse.**

Regardless of age, sex, fitness, activity, or weight, we all have muscle imbalances. Stretching and exercise can play a very important role in how much we enjoy our lives and how healthy we stay as we grow older. **Find a properly trained and experienced therapist, who can identify where the muscle imbalances are occurring in your body. They can then prescribe a very specific and very targeted stretching and exercise program for you.** And guess what? It will feel like a very unbalanced workout, but that is exactly what is needed to get your structure back into to balance. Then you can do Yoga or Pilates without risking any further damage.

## **2. Putting it off**

Be proactive and deal with the back pain straight away. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being very good and 10 being extremely bad, back pain will appear when your back gets to a 5 or 6, and disappear when it goes below 5. **So even if there is no pain, your back can still be in bad shape.** Often the pain will go away after a few days, so you don't do anything about it. This can go on for years and years- it comes back again, goes away

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and comes back again, so you might think that if you don't do anything it will go away anyway. Nothing gets done about finding the reason for it, and getting it properly treated. The problem is, eventually it will start getting worse, and **the longer you have had it for the longer it will take to fix. Pain is the body's way of telling us that the problem has reached a critical stage.** If your car is making a funny noise occasionally, it is not smart to just ignore it until something major happens.

### 3. Thinking you are fit, so you shouldn't have anything wrong

Any sport (including golf) uses some muscles more than others, so will eventually cause muscle imbalances. (For example cyclists can develop imbalances in the lower body between the quadriceps and hamstrings, and/or the hip flexors and gluts.) The more training you do which is not tailored to your body's needs, the worse the problem will eventually become.

### 4. You have to deal with both the symptoms AND the cause.

Pain is the body's way of telling us there is a problem somewhere, and treating just the pain won't solve the problem. (This includes treatments such as pain killers, Cortisone injections, anti-inflammatory drugs, electrical stimulation, heat packs and cold packs, or surgery.) If the causes of the problem are still there, these treatments will only mask the pain, **while the underlying problem keeps getting worse.** It is very likely that the pain will only come back again further down the track, probably even worse, and may show up in a different part of the body instead.

### 5. Not realising that getting back pain is a process, it doesn't just appear overnight

A tyre doesn't go immediately if you need a wheel alignment. The problem won't show up until things have gotten bad enough. **Your back problem has slowly developed over time**, and your body has continuously tried to adjust to the problem over many years until the strain was too great, and the pain kicked in. If someone bends over to pick up the newspaper and his back goes out, it is not the fault of picking up the newspaper. That was only the last straw that broke the camel's back (so to speak). Our work and our play have become much more specialised than they were for our ancestors, so we don't get the range of movement and activity that they did. We tend to be doing the same movements and activities over and over every day. Muscle imbalances can be caused by simple things done regularly such as sitting or standing incorrectly, unbalanced exercises or sport, non-ergonomic computer work stations, wearing high heels, carrying a child on one hip, or carrying a bag on one shoulder more than the other. **Over time, it is almost inevitable that muscle imbalances will develop in most of us.** You need to find someone good who can correct them for you.

### 6. Not finding a therapist (or therapists) that address the whole body

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You need to address the muscle imbalances to fix the symptoms and the cause. Please don't take an attitude of "I've tried it all", or "I just have to live with the pain". Keep looking for a therapist that can identify your muscle imbalances, and give you the appropriate treatments, plus give you strengthening and stretching exercises for YOUR body.

There are many aspects your therapist needs to assess, including the body's repair mechanisms, your stress levels, and whether any of your internal organs are causing structural imbalances. They need to determine how important it is to treat these areas to prevent the pain from coming back, and to know who to refer you to if you will need treatment in any aspects that they don't work on themselves. (It is much more effective if the other therapist works in the same Clinic, so that both therapists can keep each other fully informed about your condition, the treatments you are receiving, and the progress each is making, as is the case with Centenary Natural Therapies Clinic.)

## **7. Not taking control of your own health**

Many people will leave it up to the doctor, chiropractor, or other therapist to look after their problem. This is like relying on the schoolteacher to raise your kids- there is only so much the therapist can do if the causes of the problems are still happening away from the clinic. **The best results are obtained by people who take on the responsibility of looking after their back instead of leaving it all up to someone else.** Your therapist needs to coach and educate you in your correct rehabilitation. If a doctor or therapist says something that you don't understand, ask them to explain it again so that you do understand. Take action every single day to get your body into a healthy condition. It has taken time for your back pain to develop, and it's going to take time to get better again.

There are many more mistakes made by people with back pain but these are the most common ones.

## **Bonus Offer**

Thank you for taking the time to read this Report- we hope that you have gained some useful insights from it. We would like to provide you with a special **Bonus Offer** of a free **Back Care Assessment and Education Session** by our Head Therapist, normally valued at \$120!

### **5 Compelling Reasons Why You Can't Do Without This Session**

You will learn

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1. Sorting out back problems long-term involves 2 important things, the first one is getting the alignment of the back correct. We will let you know exactly where your structure is out of alignment, what areas of your body are causing this alignment problem and how to fix this problem.
2. What is stopping your back sorting out the problem itself!
3. If there are any nutrients that you need to get your back better
4. Whether exercises or stretches will be important for your back
5. If the answer is yes, we will teach you the best exercises for you.

This offer is strictly limited to the first 18 people who ring after receiving a copy of this Report. Once we have assessed your condition, we can advise which treatment pathway is best for you, and will help you to enjoy a life doing what you want to do, and not being restricted by pain all the time.

At **Centenary Natural Therapies Clinic**, we have **over 74 years experience** in helping relieve people of their pain and restoring them to good health. In fact, we are **the Therapist's Therapists**, as we treat many other therapists for their structural or health problems! We have the skills and experience to look after your back in the best possible way, and we even provide guarantees on the work that we do!

### **1. Best Therapists Guarantee**

If you have a better treatment or massage from another practitioner doing the same therapy in Brisbane, we will refund the cost of your last treatment.

### **2. Results Guarantee**

If your health problem hasn't improved after a course of treatment, we will refer you to another therapist and pay for your first treatment with them.

To find out exactly how we can help you get rid of this nagging back problem, please phone the Clinic on **3376 6911**, or email us at [reception@cntc.com.au](mailto:reception@cntc.com.au), and book in for your Comprehensive Assessment. You will receive a full review of your condition free of charge.

Kind regards,

**Peter Mills**

For the Team at

**Centenary Natural Therapies Clinic**

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*"I cannot remember when I last had such an abundance of energy and life in me. This clinic has given me back my LIFE. I feel as if I were a teenager again, so rich and full is my life after 20 years as a sleep walker. Thank you for making me feel and act as 17, when I really am 57!!!"*  
Biggan Ryd-Dups (Clinic client)

## **Gift Voucher**

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(normally \$120)  
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