

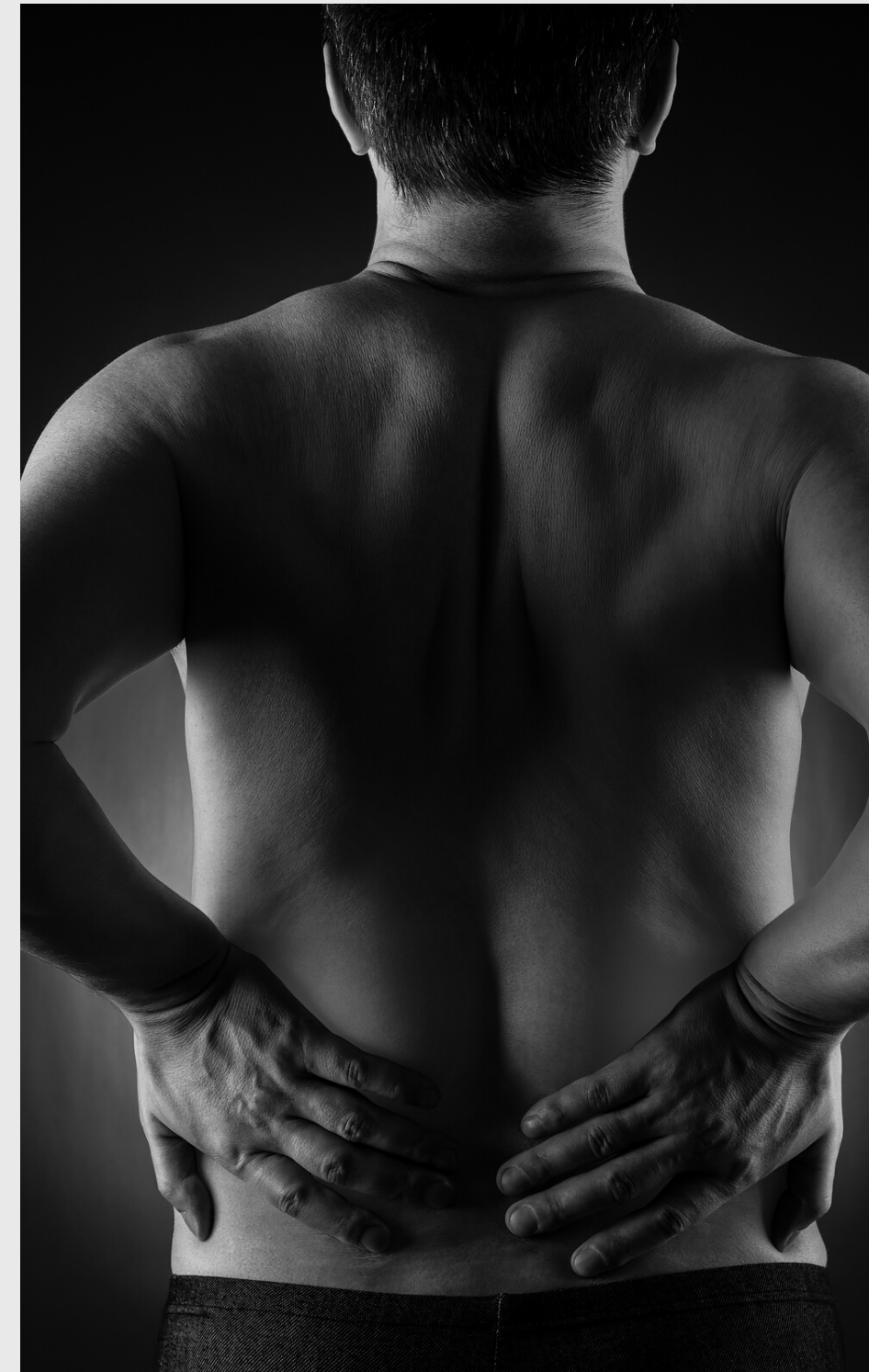
Not all back pain is the same

# Patterns of back pain

Identify the type that most closely resembles your pain pattern to employ the appropriate strategies to help you

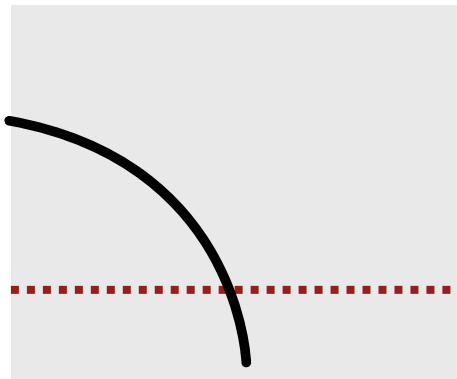
\*Very rarey (less than 1% of the time) back pain is caused by a more serious cause for which these strategies will not be appropriate and evaluation by a medical professional is needed. Learn more about how to find out if this is the case by clicking the link below

<https://primetherapyclinic.co.uk/2021/11/22/is-your-back-pain-serious/>



Prime Therapy  
— CLINIC —

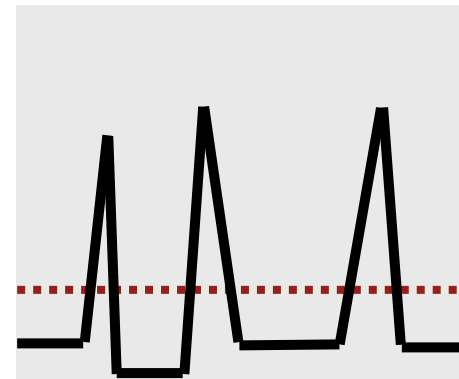
# 4 Patterns of back pain



## Non recurring

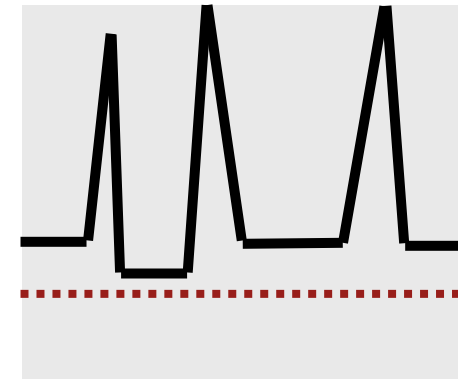
Can be quite a high level of pain initially but then eases off

Typically might occur after an injury



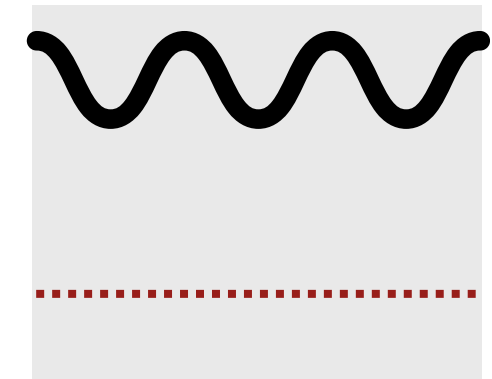
## Intermittent

Intermittent bouts of pain with periods of no pain inbetween



## Low level constant pain with flare ups

Constant lower level pain but with flare ups of higher intensity pain



## Constant high level pain

The pain is a constant high level that interferes with daily life. Although the pain intensity can vary it typically stays high

# Non-recurring

Considerations and tips for effective self management



## Don't panic

- An onset of back pain can be quite scary. However the vast majority of the time it will be significantly improved in 2-6 weeks.
- Our aim is to help create the best environment and conditions for the back to settle and heal as best and as quickly as possible



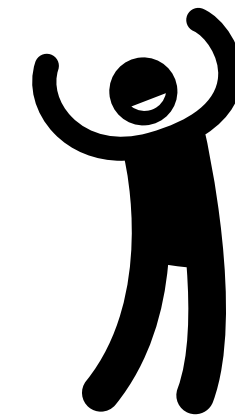
## Reduce pain

- Utilise pain relieving strategies such as heat packs and if you would like, pain medication
- Avoid aggravating activities whilst the back is healing.  
*However, once the back does start to feel better it is important to slowly re-introduce these activities.*



## Movement

- Try to stay relatively active and avoid complete rest.
- Gentle mobilisation and stretching exercises can help to reduce pain and restore pain free movement



## Prevent recurrence

- Once the pain has settled the best way to help prevent a recurrence is exercise and increased physical fitness. This includes cardiovascular exercise such as brisk walking, cycling, jogging etc. as well as strengthening based activities.
- Other aspects of a healthy lifestyle such as good diet, adequate sleep etc will also help in preventing a return of pain.

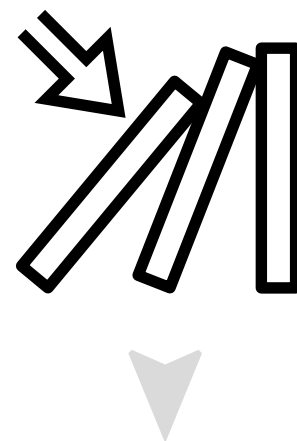
# Intermittent

Considerations and tips for effective self management



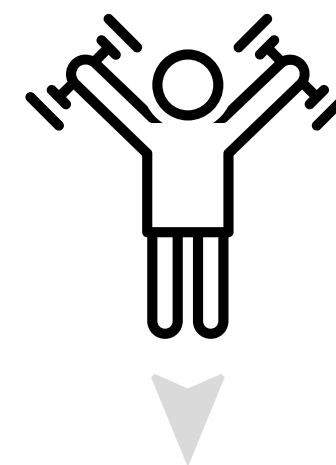
## Manage flare ups

- Flare ups can be really annoying, try not to get frustrated as this can make them worse.
- Manage the flare up in the same way as described for a new onset



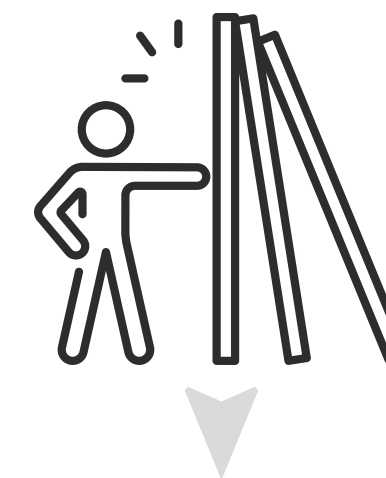
## Identify triggers

- A common mistake people make is that once the back pain has settled they go back to the usual routine and do not do anything inbetween to prevent it.
- Identify why pain might have come in the first place and then look at ways in which you could adapt and be more able to cope with triggers



## Strengthening Exercise

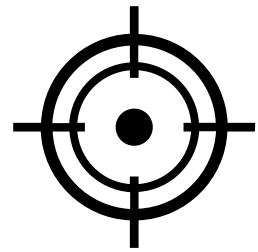
- Some strengthening exercises can further irritate the back during the painful phase so may need to be avoided whilst it settles.
- However, when the pain has decreased it can be a great opportunity to do some strengthening based activities



## Improve back resilience

- Overall fitness and leading a healthy lifestyle can help make your back more resilient and less prone to experiencing flare ups.
- If you are fit and healthy it means your back can cope with more without hurting it
- Concentrating on overall health and fitness is more beneficial than focusing on specific factors like poor posture

# Constant low level with flare ups



## Don't Focus purely on pain

- Focusing on just removing pain can reduce it in the short term but when pain has been present for a long time then these strategies lose their effectiveness.
- Over time they can even be detrimental and lead to increased pain levels as the body becomes deconditioned and less able to cope with normal everyday demands.



## Graded exposure

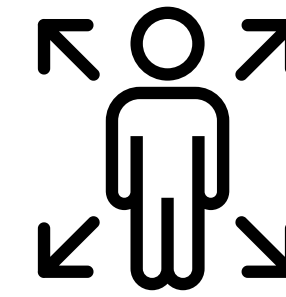
- Try and avoid the boom and bust cycle. Which is, doing too much when you have little pain which then triggers a flare up and so you can't do anything. Then when it settles do too much again!
- **Graded exposure** to activities is key. **Start slow and build up.**
- Another common mistake is waiting until pain is completely resolved before beginning certain activities. It is OK for things to cause a bit of pain (as long as it isn't too severe and it settles quickly)



## Exercise

- A common mistake is to become overly tense and brace the muscles too much.
- Exercises focusing on fluid movement are useful as well as strengthening ones.
- A variety of exercise and physical activity is beneficial. Walking, gardening, yoga, pilates, cycling, as well as strengthening exercises. They can ALL be helpful.

Considerations and tips for effective self management



## Think about more than just mechanical aspects

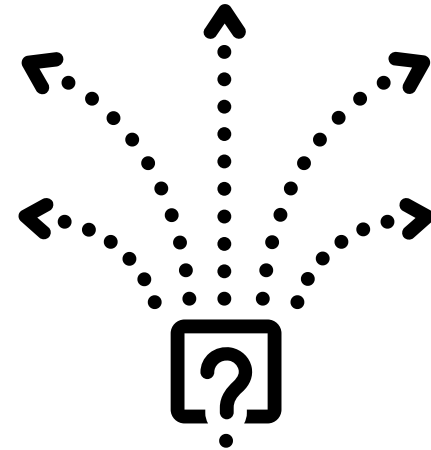
- In this type of back pain there is typically other contributing factors
- Improving knowledge around pain science can help improve our thoughts around why the pain is there and change our approach to certain activities.
- Identify other approaches that help, this can include breathing and relaxation exercises, stress management, improved sleep, overall improved lifestyle.

# Constant high bothersome pain



## Do you have pain in other areas?

- People who have constant higher levels of pain may experience pain that spreads. It may be over a larger area and/or you may experience pain in multiple areas of the body
- The reason for this is that for some people their nervous system becomes hypersensitive and so they become more aware of signals coming from all parts of the body.



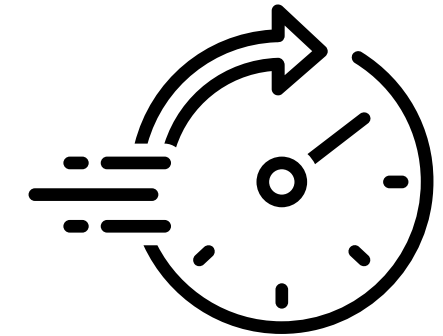
## Other treatment approaches

- Getting out of the pain cycle is going to require more than just a physical approach.
- Mind- body therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and mindfulness are useful therapeutic approaches
- Improving sleep and getting good quality sleep is very important.
- Improving diet can also help.



## Goal setting

- Pain can stop you doing what you enjoy and over time people may find they start to do less and less. This can then actually lead to more pain.
- Try to think of activities you would like to do and find a way of getting back to these activities despite pain if possible.



## Pacing

- Pacing involves regulating your daily activity to not flare up or increase pain levels.
- It involves taking breaks **before** pain and tiredness become too much.
- Overtime you can steadily pace towards more activity
- Pacing can help you do and achieve more with fewer setbacks

Considerations and tips for effective self management



## Next Steps

# FURTHER INFORMATION ON HELPING WITH BACK PAIN

If you haven't already signed up you can join our Better Back health and wellbeing group, its free to join and as a member you will receive:

- A monthly guide to better back health
- Access to regular live health talks (plus recordings and notes)
- Your invite to our supportive Facebook group
- Priority access to future workshops and discounts on products

When it comes to reducing and preventing back pain many aspects of our health and wellbeing play a vital role. The Better Back Wellbeing Membership exists to give you the knowledge and support to make positive changes for:

Better Health, A Better Back and a Better Life.

Let's do this together!

[Click here to join](#)

You can also find more information on our youtube channel, social media accounts and website