World PT Day 2024

MYTHS VS FACTS



MYTH: My back hurts a lot so I must have seriously damaged it.

FACT: Back pain can be scary, but it's rarely dangerous or associated with serious tissue damage or life-threatening disease - most people make a good recovery.



MYTH: I need a scan or x-ray to know what's wrong with my back.

FACT: Scans rarely show the cause of low back pain. So-called 'abnormal findings' on scans like disc bulges, disc degeneration and arthritis are common and normal in most people without pain, especially as they get older.



MYTH: I'm going to wear out my back by bending and lifting.

FACT: Backs do not wear out with everyday loading and bending. Gradually increasing the strength of your back should allow you to lift weights and loads in different ways.



MYTH: Strong pain killers will help my back feel better sooner.

FACT: Painkillers will not speed up your recovery. Simple pain killers, such as ibuprofen, should only be used alongside other measures, such as exercise, and even then only for a short amount of time.



MYTH: I need my back to be put 'back in place'

FACT: Low back pain doesn't mean something is out of place and needs to be put back in – your back is strong and won't go 'out of place'. It is impossible to 'slip a disc'.



MYTH: I'm getting older, so I'm going to have low back pain.

FACT: Getting older is not a major cause of low back pain, but losing strength can be a cause.



MYTH: I should rest and stay in bed to help my back recover.

FACT: Immediately following the injury, avoiding aggravating activities may help to relieve pain. However, light exercise and gradual return to usual activities is important for your recovery.



MYTH: It hurts when I do exercise and move, so I must be doing harm.

FACT: Backs become healthier with movement and physical activity. The spine is strong and capable of safely moving and loading. Common warnings to protect the spine are not necessary, and can lead to fear and over protection.



MYTH: I need to sit up straight as my bad posture is causing my back pain.

FACT: There is no one perfect posture. Having a variety of postures throughout the day is good for the back. They should feel comfortable and relaxed for you. Differences in postures are a fact of life.



MYTH: I need to do a lot of core exercises to avoid low back pain.

FACT: Low back pain is not caused by a weak core. Evidence shows that doing specific core exercises do not offer extra benefit over general exercise, eg walking, for pain and disability.



MYTH: I need to have surgery or injections to cure my back pain.

FACT: Surgery and injections are very rarely a cure. Exercise and self-management techniques are recommended, and have been shown to be as beneficial, with less risk.



MYTH: The more pain I have, the more my spine is damaged.

FACT: More pain does not always mean more damage. People with similar spine problems can feel very different levels of pain.



Your physiotherapist will give advice and guide you on the best ways to manage your low back pain.



World Physiotherapy

#WorldPTDay
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