

Important Facts I

The spine is one of the strongest parts of the body and in most cases simple strains cause no lasting damage.

While X-Rays and MRI scans can detect serious spinal injuries they do not help where the damage is less serious. If your doctor or therapist cannot exactly locate the source of the pain this can be a good sign – indicating there is no serious damage to the spine.

The most acute pain will generally improve within a few days or weeks, but you may find aches and niggling pain lasts longer. This prolonged pain does not indicate that there is a serious problem.

The important thing is to get moving as soon as possible. Most people can start getting on with their lives once the most acute pain has subsided; resuming normal activities with little or no pain.

It helps to get back to work as soon as possible, even if you have some pain. [Your back will usually not get any worse at work than it will at home.](#) If you have a heavy, manual job then you may need some help or modification to your workload initially, but generally all that's needed are some simple changes. [The longer you stay off work the more likely you are to develop long-term pain and disability.](#)

Going back to work and your other activities will take your mind off your back problem. This will aid your recovery by reducing the stress and anxiety which in turn cause muscle tension.

Your back is designed for movement: the sooner you get moving and return to normal activities the better you will feel.

Bed rest for more than a day or two is bad for your back and can actually prolong the pain.

Warning signs

If you have severe pain that does not improve or even gets worse over several weeks, or if you are unwell with back pain then you should consult your doctor.

Other symptoms which indicate the possibility of a more serious problem include:

- ◆ Difficulty passing or controlling urine
- ◆ Numbness around the back passage or genitals
- ◆ Numbness, pins & needles or weakness in both legs
- ◆ Unsteadiness on your feet