



TEN TIPS TO TALK TURKEY ABOUT

Low Back Pain

MYTH

- My low back pain is only caused by arthritis, weak core muscles, or bad posture.
- Prescription medications are the best treatment for my low back pain.
- I need an MRI or X-ray to “see” what is wrong with my back.
- When I have pain, I need to rest my back as much as possible to keep from damaging it even more.
- Corticosteroid injections can fix what is wrong with my back.
- Surgery can fix what is wrong with my back.
- Once low back pain starts, it will never go away or get better.
- There is only one “right” way to treat low back pain.
- Medical doctors are the only clinicians who can effectively treat my low back pain.
- I will not be able to enjoy life with chronic low back pain.

REALITY

- While specific medical conditions or injuries contribute to low back pain, its causes are often more complex than a single disorder.
- Most experts agree that non-drug strategies like heat, acupuncture, PT, or a combo of modalities should be tried first.
- X-rays and MRIs are typically not recommended unless there are signs of nerve or spinal cord involvement, or pain does not improve in 4-6 weeks with conservative management
- Rest may be helpful for new low back pain. However, too much inactivity can make pain worse as joints can become stiffer and muscles weaker.
- Corticosteroids may temporarily decrease low back pain for some people. However, they do not address the underlying causes of pain.
- Most people with low back pain do not need surgery, and, in these cases, early surgery will probably not keep your back from getting worse.
- New low back pain usually goes away on its own within 2-3 weeks. In these cases, acupuncture, spinal manipulation, exercise, massage or physical therapy can help decrease your pain while your back heals.
- Many of the same treatments that work for new low back pain also help for longer term pain.
- In addition to medical doctors, a range of trained and qualified individuals can guide you to the best approaches for your low back pain.
- Studies show that multimodal pain care improves quality of life, sleep and function while decreasing depression and “interference” from pain.



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