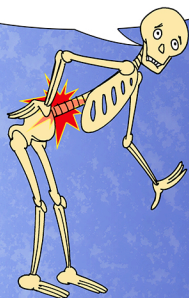


THE TRUTH ABOUT A PAIN IN THE BACK

My back is killin' me!!



Billy Bones here and I want to talk about Back Pain, but first let's dispell some common myths and misconceptions about back pain.

Common Myths About Back Pain

Kids are too young to have back pain.

False

Everything that hurts is serious.

False

Back pain in kids is the same as in adults.

and False!

More than 50% of children and teenagers will complain of back pain at some time. There are many possible causes for back pain. Some may be serious while others just uncomfortable. Determining the reason for the back pain is important. Evaluating the location of the pain, duration of the pain, range of motion, and x-rays are the first steps in the diagnostic process.

Most back pain can be classified as:

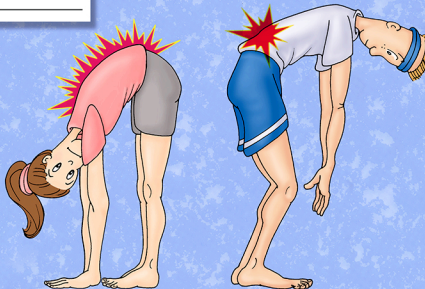
GLOBAL BACK PAIN or FOCAL BACK PAIN

GLOBAL BACK PAIN

Children with global back pain usually describe their pain as being "all over" and occurring off and on without specific triggers. They often use the word "random" to describe their symptoms and complain of pain after sitting or standing for long periods of time.

Global Back Pain:

- Pain anywhere between the neck and the tailbone
- Pain that comes and goes
- Pain does not interfere with sleep, motion or normal activity
- Pain that does not need medications



FOCAL BACK PAIN

Often is related to an injury, is present at all times and is localized to a specific area in the back.

Focal Back Pain:

- Pain that is in a specific part of the back
- Pain does not typically come and go
- Pain that can interfere with sleeping
- Pain that decreases spinal range of motion
- Pain is decreased with medications but then it comes back
- Pain is associated with weakness, numbness, high fevers, or night sweats



Global Back Pain Evaluation

X-rays, blood work, MRI, CAT scan, bone scans or nerve tests are all NORMAL.

"So if all the tests are normal...why does my back hurt ???"

Global Back Pain is muscle soreness caused by **FATIGUE!** Fatigue of the back muscles comes from overtaxing muscles that are not well conditioned. Year round sports, overtraining, poor posture, sitting in a classroom for 7 hours a day, and even "doing nothing" are all examples of things that can lead to tired, sore back muscles.

Global Back Pain Treatment

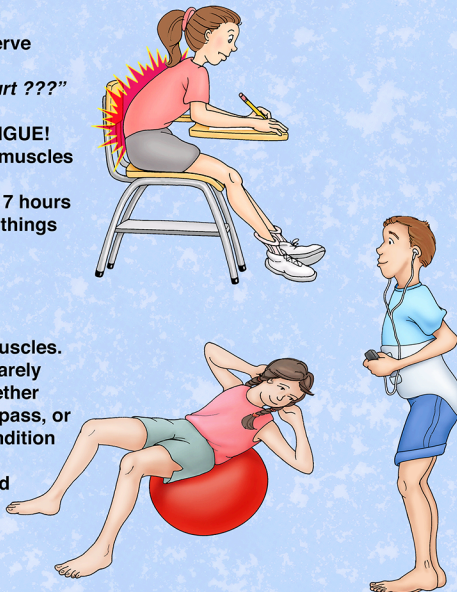
Take care of your back!!

Most of us don't think about exercising our back muscles. Even those who are active in high demand sports rarely condition the muscles of the back adequately. Whether you are asking your back to do a difficult tumbling pass, or just hold your body upright all day, you need to condition the back muscles.

Activities that condition the back muscles are called "Core Strengthening".

Family education regarding proper use of the Pain

This pain is a 2 out of 10!

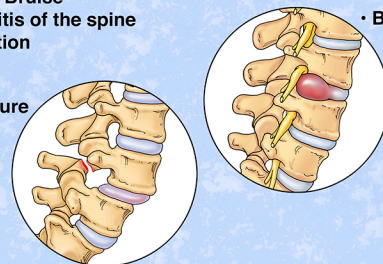


Focal Back Pain Evaluation

One or more of the tests are **ABNORMAL** and the results of these tests help to diagnose the problem as:

- Bone Bruise
- Arthritis of the spine
- Infection

- Fracture



• Bulging disc

Focal Back Pain Treatment

Brace wear for 2-3 months will allow most bone bruises and stress fractures of the spine to heal.

Surgery may be required for other conditions.

Understanding Back Pain

Pain is based on the brain's interpretation of messages it receives from the body. The information sent to the brain comes from sensors in the tendons, ligaments, muscles, discs, nerves and bones. The sensors notify the brain of changes in the body caused by fatigue, illness or injury. The brain then determines how these changes are interpreted and how much pain is felt. Since pain cannot be measured with tests or x-rays, a scale from one to ten is used to describe back pain.

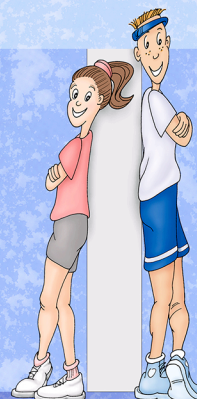
Back Conditions and Pain Scale Scores:

- 1 Normal
- 2 Fatigue
- 3 Muscle strain
- 4 Pulled ligament or tendon
- 5 Torn muscle
- 6 Stress fracture of the bone
- 7 Pinched nerve
- 8 Tumor
- 9 Infection
- 10 Pain so severe you cannot breathe!!!



Back pain in children and teenagers requires a thorough evaluation if the symptoms have lasted continuously for more than 2 months. A physical examination, x-rays, blood work, and other imaging studies may be required to separate fatigue and overuse type pain from more serious conditions.

The early identification of treatable back conditions may allow your child to enjoy a more normal adult life.



Orthopaedics for Kids