



## Treatment Options for Lower Back Pain

Anyone who has dealt with lower back pain will tell you how disruptive it can be. It can make it hard to sleep, work, do normal daily tasks, and participate in activities you enjoy.

Unfortunately, a lot of people suffer from lower back pain. In fact, it is the leading cause of disability around the world.

Lower back pain can range from mild achiness to sudden, intense spasms. Fortunately, there are several treatment options available. (Always check with your doctor about any pain, and get their advice before starting treatments.)

- **Ice and heat.** Ice helps to reduce pain and inflammation. Apply ice for short amounts of time, several times per day. Heat, on the other hand, helps to increase blood circulation. You can safely apply heat to your lower back in a warm shower/bath or with a heating pad.
- **Work your core.** Your body's core helps to support your back. Strengthening your inner core decreases the pressure on your lower back. Try adding a gentle core workout to your daily routine.
- **Physical therapy.** A physical therapist will recommend specific exercises to help you increase flexibility and improve the range of motion in your lower back.
- **Cortisone injection.** This may help to reduce inflammation around the nerve roots, providing pain relief for a month or two.
- **Surgery.** If other treatments fail to relieve your pain, you may need surgery—especially if there are issues with the structures in your back. You may be a candidate for minimally invasive back surgery, which offers less downtime and faster recovery than traditional surgery.



### The best treatment is prevention

It can be tough to know the exact causes of lower back pain. But excess weight, lack of exercise, and/or poor posture often play a role. Making lifestyle changes to address these issues could alleviate current lower back pain and prevent additional problems down the road.

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## Prevent Pain with Better Ergonomics

Any physical activity you do consistently can affect how you feel (for better or worse). That's why ergonomics—the science of arranging things people use for the most efficient and safest interactions—is so important.

If you work in front of a computer, for instance, less-than-ideal posture can lead to long-term health problems. Lower back pain, neck or shoulder pain, and carpal tunnel syndrome are just a few examples.

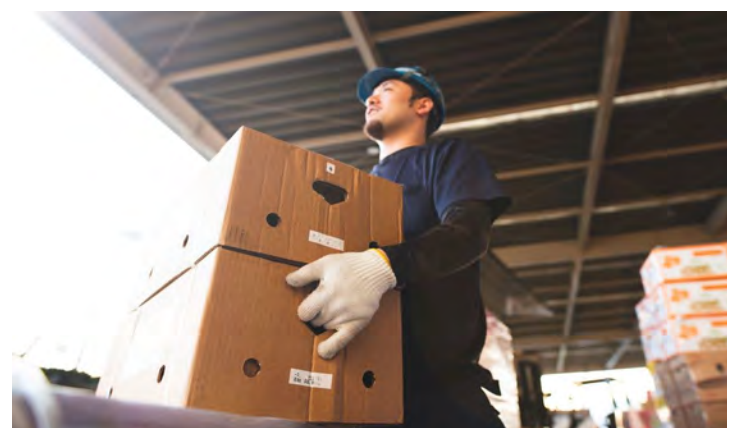
To prevent conditions like these, practice good ergonomic habits:

- **Use care when lifting.** Lift within the safety zone (elbow to knuckle height), and bend at the hips and knees.
- **Look straight ahead.** Laptops and phones are convenient, but they're not always the best for our health since we typically look down at their screens. A larger monitor (or an elevated laptop) may make it easier for you to look straight ahead when working, alleviating strain on your neck.
- **Recline a bit when sitting.** Sitting at a 90-degree angle puts a lot of pressure on your hips. Instead, try to recline slightly.
- **Place your keyboard and mouse at the right height.** Your forearms and hands should be straight and level. If you've raised your laptop to put the screen at a comfortable height, you may need a separate keyboard and mouse so they can be positioned independently.

- **Move around.** Break up your work routine with stretching, walking, and different postures.
- **Put your feet flat on the floor.** Letting your feet dangle or putting them underneath you may increase the risk of deep vein thrombosis—a potentially fatal condition. Instead, place your feet flat on the floor or on a footrest.

### Prioritize your positioning

Developing good ergonomic habits will help you feel less tired and sore at the end of the workday. It will also help to prevent chronic, painful conditions over time.







## Take a (Healthy) Break

You might think that a “model” employee is one who works nonstop all day long. But that’s not true (or healthy, or effective).

Research shows that taking short breaks throughout the workday delivers a lot of benefits. It can boost your productivity, memory, and job satisfaction. Stepping away for a few minutes can also help you make better decisions and improve your mental and physical health.

One way to reenergize yourself during a break is to do something that uses a different part of your brain than you were using for work. This helps to reset your brain’s ability to focus.

That makes exercise a great way to take a break. In addition to helping you recharge your mind, it can also improve your circulation, ease cramped muscles, and decrease stress. Even just a quick walk or some basic stretches will do.

If exercise isn’t an option, getting fresh air, meditating or taking some deep breaths can also help you recharge. Having a healthy snack and a glass of water is another great way to revive your mind and body.

Whatever you do to take a break, try to unplug from work entirely (including your phone and email)—even if it’s just for a few minutes.



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# HEALTHY BREAKFAST EGG MUFFINS (3 WAYS)

## Ingredients

### EGG BASE:

- 12 large eggs
- salt and pepper, to taste

### BROCCOLI, BACON & CHEDDAR:

- 4 cups broccoli florets
- 3 slices bacon
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup chives, finely sliced

### ITALIAN SAUSAGE, KALE & PARMESAN:

- 1/2 pound Italian sausage
- 1 shallot, finely diced
- 3 cup (packed) kale, roughly chopped
- 1 cup grated parmesan

### SPINACH, TOMATO & GOAT CHEESE:

- 24 grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup (packed) baby spinach
- 1 scallion, thinly sliced
- 6 ounces goat cheese

## Instructions

### EGG BASE:

1. Add the 12 eggs to a large 4-cup measuring cup and season with salt and pepper. Whisk the eggs until fluffy.

### BROCCOLI, BACON & CHEDDAR:

1. Slice the bacon into 1/2-inch thick pieces. Add to a saute pan over medium heat, stirring frequently and cook until crispy. Use a slotted spoon to remove the bacon to a paper towel.
2. Fill a pot with 1-inch of water and bring it to a boil. Insert a steamer basket, then add the broccoli florets. Cover with a lid and cook for 5-6 minutes. Remove the steamer basket and broccoli, and let cool for a couple of minutes. Then dice the broccoli into small pieces.
3. Fill the muffin tray about 1/2 full with pieces of broccoli, bacon, and cheddar cheese. Sprinkle with chives. Then fill with egg mixture about 90% full and bake at 350F for 20-25 minutes.

### SAUSAGE, KALE & PARMESAN:

1. Add the sausage to a saute pan on medium heat. Use a spatula to break up the sausage and cook it until it's just browned.
2. If there's enough fat in the pan from the sausage, you might not need to add oil. But if the pan looks dry, add 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add the shallot and kale to the pan and saute for 2 minutes, or until the kale has wilted. Then remove from the heat.
3. Fill the muffin tray about 1/2 full with the sausage kale mixture. Sprinkle some parmesan cheese into each muffin cup. Then fill with egg mixture about 90% full and bake at 350F for 20-25 minutes.

### SPINACH, TOMATO & GOAT CHEESE:

1. Roughly chop the baby spinach. Then, add a small handful of spinach to each muffin cup.
2. Add 4 grape tomatoes halves and a sprinkle of scallions and goat cheese. Then fill with egg mixture about 90% full and bake at 350F for 20-25 minutes.

Let the muffins cool slightly, then run a knife along the outer edge and remove each egg muffin. Enjoy immediately or store in the fridge or freezer.

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
15 minutes	25 minutes	12



## Nutrition Facts

Calories	352
Total Fat	10g
Cholesterol	177mg
Sodium	167mg
Carbohydrate	3g
Dietary Fiber	1g
Total Sugars	1g
Protein	9g





# Schedule a (Healthy) Break each day

Take short breaks throughout the workday to help boost your productivity, memory, and job satisfaction.

## Employer Completion Form


I successfully completed the (Healthy) Break Activity by:


Signed:

Date:

# Take a (Healthy Break)

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Your Wellbeing Activity  
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