Working together for a safer, stronger future.
Health Moment on Low Back Pain
introduction

Low back pain is a disorder of the muscles and bones of the back.

It is a universal human experience -- almost everyone has it at some point. Starts between 20-40 years of age, but more prevalent for those between 40-80 years.

*Globally, it is the most common cause of job-related disability, and the second most common neurological ailment after headache.*

It is classified as **acute**, (less than 6 weeks), **sub acute** (6–12 weeks), or **chronic** (more than 12 weeks) in duration.
causes

- Trauma,
- Aging and degenerative conditions
- Congenital abnormalities in the spine
- Skeletal irregularities
- Diseases and infection of the bones
- Excessive stationary position
- Repetitive motion
- Awkward posture

Risk factors

- obesity, smoking, weight gain, stress, poor physical condition, posture inappropriate for the activity being performed, carrying heavy bags, poor sleeping position and kidney stones.
Symptoms

- Range from a dull ache to a stabbing or shooting sensation.
- Red flag includes:
  - loss of bowel or bladder control,
  - numbness in the groin area or legs,
  - leg weakness,
  - fever, and
  - pain when coughing or urinating.
**treatment**

A. **Physical Management:** 90% of lower back pain will go on its own

- Bed rest – a few hours to max. 2 days for most LBP. Sciatica: 2 – 4 days bed rest
  - Application of ice (or heat) to the back
  - Change of posture at work or home

B. **Medical**

- Analgesics – Paracetamol, ibuprofen, diclofenac,
- Treat any infection or other causes

C: **Surgery**

D: **Others**:

- Physiotherapy
- Acupuncture, body massage, etc
Prevention 1/2

- Maintain back’s three natural curves.
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Use safe lifting technique and maintain correct posture for all activities.
- Break up tasks, such as long drives, into shorter segments.
- Exercise daily to build strong supporting muscles.
- Obey micro pause and stretch breaks.
- Stop smoking
Prevention 2/2

- Don’t lift or carry anything heavier than you can manage with ease e.g. travel bags, work site loads, etc.
- Don’t slouch or bend forward while sitting or driving.
- Sleep on your back or side on a mattress that supports your back’s natural curves
- Sit in a chair with good lumbar support and proper position and height for the task.
- Wear comfortable low-heeled shoes.
- Use appropriate mattress and change it regularly – orthopaedic type.
Back pain is preventable: cost and embarrassment can be prevented.

If ignored, it can lead to life long debilitating condition.

Sexual activities should be moderate when having low back pain.

Health education should be centered on the implicated activities.