

Low back pain recovery plan

For most people, the cause of their low back pain isn't clear, but evidence shows that serious causes are very rare.¹ This action plan outlines some of the treatments that can help you recover from low back pain that does not have a clear cause and has been present for a short time.

Simple treatments

Low back pain is unpleasant and can be distressing, but in most cases you will recover within 4–6 weeks just with simple treatments.^{2,5–7}

It's recommended that everyone with low back pain starts these simple treatments as soon as possible.^{2–4}

Work with your healthcare professional to develop a recovery plan that suits your needs and situation.⁴

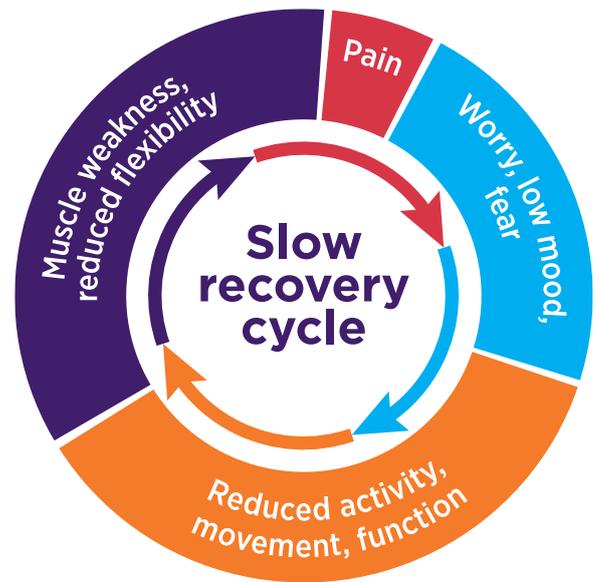
- Stay active as much as possible^{2–4} (see overleaf for details)
- Continue or quickly return to work and daily activities^{2–4}
- Use heat packs to help with pain relief²

Slow recovery

Recovery can be slower than usual for a small number of people and lead to long-term low back pain.²

This can happen for many reasons.² One of the key reasons is how you feel and respond to pain.⁸

It's natural to feel worried, sad or fearful when you are in pain.³ However these thoughts and feelings can lead to a vicious cycle for some people,^{3,9} which affects how long it takes them to recover.⁸



Other treatments

If you have entered a slow recovery cycle, your healthcare professional can recommend one or more treatments in addition to the simple treatments above.^{2–4}

Start these other treatments as early as possible to support your recovery.^{2–4}

Medicines may also be recommended to help reduce your pain, but don't expect them to stop your pain completely.²

If medicines are needed, take them to help you stay as active as possible.²

- Exercise (eg, aerobic fitness, strengthening, stretching, whole body movements).^{2,4} After you recover, exercise can prevent future low back pain episodes.^{10,11}
- Manual therapies (eg, massage, mobilisation, manipulation).^{4,12}
- Psychological approach to treatment (eg, psychological therapies applied to physiotherapy, cognitive behavioural therapy).^{2,3}
- Medicines:

