

Thoracic back pain

Information and advice

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This information is designed to supplement the advice given by your doctor, and is written by physiotherapists based on the latest medical advice.

Over time the maintenance of a poor posture can lead to spinal pain, particularly between the shoulder blades. You can help to overcome this pain by improving your posture and by performing these exercises.

Standing posture

Stand tall. Don't slouch. Raise your breast bone up towards the ceiling. Stand with your feet slightly apart and your weight evenly distributed over both feet. Change position regularly, moving around every 20-30 minutes.

Sitting posture

Sit well back in a supportive chair with your thighs parallel to the floor. A small pillow can provide extra support to your lower back. Keep shoulder blades pulled gently down and back and chin tucked in. Don't slouch.

It is hard at first to change habits but if you persevere, good posture will soon become automatic. The stress on your back will be less and you will start to feel better.

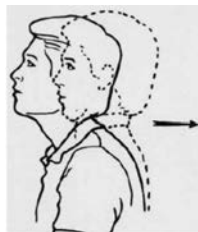
Exercises

The following exercises will help. Start gently with the exercises and as you feel able, increase the range and number of repetitions. Start with completing two or three times a day.

1. Sitting with your back supported, gently tuck chin to chest as if making a 'double chin'.

Hold for the count of three seconds

Repeat five times



2. Link your fingers behind your back and squeeze shoulder blades together. Keeping upright, slowly raise and straighten your arms.

Hold for five seconds

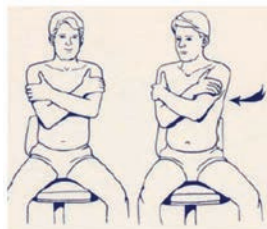
Repeat five times



3. Sitting in a chair with your arms across your chest, turn your trunk to the right and hold for five seconds.

Then turn to the left.

Repeat five times each side



4. Sitting in a low-backed chair with arms clasped behind your head, gently arch your back until a stretch is felt.

Hold for five seconds.

Repeat five times



5. Sitting sideways on a chair with a rolled up towel tucked under your inside arm, gently bend to side and hold for five seconds.



Repeat five times

Perform all exercises five times each, twice a day. Slowly increase the hold time to 15 seconds if possible.

If you feel the exercises are making your pain worse, reduce the number or frequency of the exercises or stop and seek advice



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