



Back Pain Prevention

An evidence-based guide built from the latest back and spine research

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Disclaimer:

This guide is for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. It does not replace assessment by a qualified healthcare professional. Seek medical advice if symptoms persist, worsen, or if you have concerns about starting or changing physical activity.

**Most back pain is not caused by “bad posture.”
It is caused by load, habits, and poor recovery.**

This guide reveals what actually reduces your risk of common lower back pain, based on decades of spine research.

Back pain advice online is noisy, contradictory, and often outdated. This guide is different.

It was created by reviewing over **20 peer-reviewed** systematic reviews, randomised trials, and long-term cohort studies from modern spine and sports medicine research. Only strategies with **consistent evidence** were included. Popular myths and low-value interventions were deliberately excluded.

The goal is simple:

Help you reduce your risk of back pain using what science actually supports.

THE CORE CHEAT SHEET

1. Move often, not perfectly

Regular movement matters more than posture.

- Aim for around **150 minutes of walking per week**
- Spread activity across the week
- Consistency beats intensity



People who stay moderately active have fewer and less severe back pain episodes.

2. Strength protects the spine

The spine relies on surrounding muscles to absorb load.

- Strengthen **legs, hips, and trunk**
- **2-3 sessions per week** is enough
- Simple exercises work. Complexity is not required.



Stronger muscles reduce strain on spinal tissues during daily life.

3. Sitting is not dangerous. Unbroken sitting is.

Sitting itself is not the problem. Prolonged sitting is.

- Try not to sit longer than **60 minutes at a time**
- Stand, walk, or gently move for a few minutes
- Reducing sitting by even **one hour per day** is meaningful



Frequent breaks matter more than perfect ergonomics.

4. Build gradually

Sudden spikes in activity increase flare-ups.

- Increase volume slowly
- Avoid “all-or-nothing” cycles
- Expect adaptation, not instant fixes



The spine responds best to progressive, repeatable load.

5. Recovery drives resilience

Pain is influenced by the nervous system, not just tissues.

- Poor sleep increases pain sensitivity
- Stress and low mood increase disability
- Recovery is part of prevention, not a bonus



Ignoring recovery undermines even good exercise habits.

What does *not* reliably prevent back pain?

These are commonly promoted but poorly supported when used alone:

- Back belts or lumbar supports
- Ergonomic furniture as the main solution
- Insoles or posture correction devices
- Avoiding movement “to protect the back”

They are not harmful, but they are low priority compared to movement and strength.

Want this tailored to you?

This guide outlines what generally reduces the risk of back pain, but risk is not evenly distributed.

After analysing over 20 scientific studies, **27 distinct risk factors** were identified, and no two people share the same combination.

Trying to address everything at once is rarely effective. Prevention works best when the **right factors are prioritised** in the right order.

Future-proof your back with the [Protero Personalised Back Health Plan](#)

Protero Personalised Back Health Plan

The personalised version uses key factors such as your age, activity level, work demands, daily sitting time, sleep quality, and back-pain history to create a plan that fits you.

It is designed to:

- Identify your **primary risk drivers**
- Prioritise what you should focus on **first**, not everything at once
- Set a **safe and realistic starting point** for activity
- Remove low-value or unnecessary advice
- Reduce the risk of flare-ups from doing too much, too soon

This is not a diagnosis or treatment plan.

It is a **risk-informed prevention strategy**, built from the same scientific evidence used to create this guide.

How it works

1. You complete a short questionnaire
2. Your risk profile is analysed using evidence-based criteria
3. You receive a personalised back-health plan tailored to your profile

[**Personalise My Plan**](#)