

Recommended

What science tells us is most likely to help

Diagnosis of low back pain should be based on a thorough clinical assessment



high value

In 95% of cases, diagnosis does not require scans (X-ray, CT, MRI)

Management plans should include:

Putting you in charge of managing your pain

Helping you to achieve your goals

Staying active in the right amounts (not too little or too much)



Learning healthy lifestyle habits

Helpful & positive education about how you can recover

Supporting weight loss, if needed

Helping you to manage stress & worry



Most back pain resolves, it's important to try and relax and keep moving.

5 questions to ask your health care practitioner:

These are the recommended questions that you should ask your health professional/s about your low back pain to help you decide what the right care is for you.

- 1 Do I really need this test, treatment or procedure?
- 2 What are the risks?
- 3 Are there simpler, safer options?
- 4 What happens if I don't do anything?
- 5 What are the costs?

These questions help to make sure you end up with the right amount of care — not too much and not too little.

For more info see our pain condition and management modules.

(screenshot friendly)

High value care is:

- ↑ **Effective**
Evidence shows that it works to produce a positive effect
- ✓ **Safe**
There is low risk of harm
- \$ **Cost effective**
Despite cost, the care provides benefit relative to other options

Low value care is:

- ↓ **Ineffective**
Evidence shows that the care will provide no or very little benefit
- ✗ **Potentially harmful**
The risk of harm is greater than any likely benefit
- 💰 **Not cost effective**
If the care is unlikely to provide a benefit, the cost could be used on other care options

Not recommended

What science tells us is not likely to help and may cause harm

low value

Relying only on passive treatment (massage, acupuncture, etc.)

Relying only on medication (especially strong medicines)

Relying only on injection procedures (for example cortisone)

Use of opioid medication (high risk of harm)

Treatments that do not help low back pain:

Spinal fusion & disc replacements

TENS, PENS, interferential, ultrasound

Corsets, belts, traction

Bed rest