

How Much Do We Understand About Lower Back Pain?

A GP's Guide To Diagnosis And Treatment Approach



FACT

- Lower back pain affects up to **80%** of adults at some point in their lives.
- Lower back pain is the leading cause of disability worldwide.
- In Australia, lower back pain is the most common musculoskeletal condition, affecting **16%** of the population.

As a general practitioner, effectively diagnosing and managing lower back pain requires a systematic approach to identify the underlying cause and determine your patient's most appropriate treatment plan. Working with a physiotherapist to treat lower back pain will significantly improve patient outcomes:

- **30%** reduction in opioid prescriptions for back pain patients
- **25%** decrease in imaging referrals for uncomplicated lower back pain
- **40%** improvement in patient-reported outcomes using the Oswestry Disability Index

Steps To Follow For An Effective Diagnosis:

- 1** Identify the onset, duration, and nature of pain your patient is experiencing (e.g., acute, chronic, mechanical, or neural)
- 2** Evaluate the impact of pain on the patient's daily activities and quality of life
- 3** Conduct a physical examination, including range of motion tests
- 4** Perform specific tests such as the straight leg raise to rule out any nerve involvement
- 5** Consider imaging only if serious pathology is suspected or if symptoms persist despite conservative treatment

When To Refer Your Patient To Physiotherapy

The earlier we see a patient, the faster their treatment and recovery will be.

- **Persistent Pain:** When pain persists despite initial treatment or self-care measures.
- **Functional Limitation:** If the patient experiences significant limitations in mobility or daily activities.
- **Post-Injury Rehabilitation:** For structured rehabilitation following back injuries or surgeries.
- **Preventive Care:** To prevent recurrence through core strengthening and mobility exercises.

Manual Therapy

Our skilled physiotherapists use various techniques to remove pain and restore function:

- Passive accessory intervertebral and facet joint mobilisation
- McKenzie extension techniques
- Mulligans with movement mobilisations
- Soft tissue massage and myofascial release

Exercise Prescription

We design tailored exercise programs to:

- Strengthen core and back muscles
- Improve flexibility and range of motion
- Enhance overall spinal stability

Education and Self-Management

We teach patients about the root cause of their lower back pain and at-home pain management strategies they can use to support physiotherapy treatments.

Remove their pain

Our priority is getting your patients fast relief, by finding and eliminating the source of pain.

01

Restore their movement

We ensure they are equipped to protect themselves from re-injury, with comprehensive strength and stability techniques.

02

Rediscover their potential

Our physios are passionate about giving your patients the freedom to do what they need to do.

03

360 Physio Revesby's Approach To Treating Lower Back Pain For Successful Patient Outcomes

We understand the challenges GPs face in managing patients with lower back pain. Our approach is designed not only to provide excellent patient care but also to support a patient's return to a pain-free life. We combine hands-on manual therapies, specific exercises and education to ensure your patients receive the specialist attention they need to facilitate a full recovery. Throughout the treatment process, we will always maintain regular communication, sending concise updates after key milestones or any significant changes in the patient's condition. This collaborative approach allows you to:

- **Confidently manage your patient's overall health while we focus on their lower back pain**
- **Reduce follow-up appointments for persistent back pain**

Did you find this information useful?

Visit the 360 Physio Revesby General Practitioners Hub for more valuable resources to empower your patient for better outcomes with physiotherapy.



Contact us to find out more about how we can help your patients reach their potential.

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