



TAKE CAUTION » AND PUT AN END TO BACK PAIN «

In the United States, back pain is a common complaint, affecting four out of five people at least once during their lives, according to the Mayo Clinic. Risk factors for back pain include obesity, smoking, depression and a sedentary lifestyle. Fortunately, many cases of back pain are preventable or treatable. Sometimes, however, surgery is necessary to restore proper function.

CAUSES

Often, back pain is caused by strained muscles and ligaments; improper lifting techniques; and after an uncomfortable or quick, clumsy movement. Back pain is also caused frequently by ruptured or bulging disks, the cartilage-like cushions between the vertebrae of the spine. Other causes include arthritis, osteoporosis and skeletal irregularities, such as an abnormal curve in the spine.

PREVENT THE PAIN

Practicing appropriate body mechanics and achieving or maintaining a healthy physical condition can go a long way toward preventing back pain. Consider the following suggestions:

- » While sitting, keep knees and hips level.
- » While standing for long periods, relieve your back by placing one foot at a time on a stool.
- » To lift properly: lift with the legs; bend at the knees while maintaining a straight back; hold the load close to the body; and do not lift and twist at the same time.
- » Engage in regular low-impact exercise, such as walking and swimming.
- » Participate in core-strengthening exercise to build muscle flexibility and strength.
- » Stop smoking—smoking causes decreased oxygen levels in spinal tissue. For help quitting smoking, talk to your physician.
- » Achieve or maintain a healthy weight to avoid putting additional strain on the back muscles.

ADDITIONAL SYMPTOMS

Rarely, back pain indicates a serious medical issue. Consult a physician immediately if back pain is accompanied by fever or unexplained weight loss; causes bladder or bowel problems; causes weakness or numbness in one or both legs; or follows a fall or other injury.

If you experience back pain, consult a physician for diagnosis and treatment options.





Skin Cancer

The Power of Prevention

Skin cancer, the most common type of cancer, accounts for approximately 50 percent of all cancer cases in the United States. There are different types of skin cancer: melanoma and non-melanoma. Melanoma is the more serious, but less common type of skin cancer. According to the American Cancer Society, melanoma accounts for less than 5 percent of skin cancer cases, but causes most skin cancer deaths. Basal and squamous cell skin cancers are the two most common types of non-melanoma skin cancer. These cancers are more common, but less serious skin cancers. There are as many as 1 million cases of basal and squamous cell skin cancer annually, but fewer than 2,000 people die of non-melanoma cancers each year in the United States.

Risk Factors

Risk factors for both melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers include too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light, fair skin and previous skin cancer. Additional risk factors for melanoma include certain types of or many moles and family history of melanoma. Smoking is an additional risk factor for squamous cell skin cancers.

Prevention

Not all skin cancers can be prevented; however, there are steps you can take to reduce your risk of developing skin cancer. The American Cancer Society makes the following recommendations.

- **Limit UV light exposure.** Do not stay in the sunlight for too long, particularly midday when UV light is most intense.
- **Protect your skin with clothing.** Dark-colored, long-sleeved shirts and long pants made of tightly woven fabrics offer the most protection.
- **Wear a hat.** A hat with a 2 to 3 inch brim offers protection to the scalp, ears, neck, eyes, forehead and nose.

- **Apply sunscreen** and lip balm with an SPF of 15 or higher. Reapply every two hours and after swimming or sweating.
- **Wear wrap-around sunglasses** with at least 99 percent UV absorption.
- **Stay in the shade**—particularly between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when the rays of the sun are most intense.
- **Avoid other sources of UV light** such as tanning beds and sunlamps.
- **Check for abnormal moles** and have them removed.

Early Detection

In addition to undergoing skin examinations as part of regular cancer-related check-ups, the American Cancer Society recommends checking your own skin once a month and learning the pattern of moles, freckles and blemishes on your skin so that you will be aware if a change occurs. If a spot on the skin changes in size, shape or color, as outlined below in the American Cancer Society's ABCD rule, consult a physician as soon as possible.

Asymmetry – the two sides of the mole do not match

Border irregularity – the edges of the mole appear ragged or notched

Color – the entire mole is not the same color—there are various shades of tan, brown or black, and sometimes patches of pink, red, blue or white

Diameter – the mole is wider than 6 millimeters across

Any new or changing mole, sore, blemish or other spot on the skin that looks or feels unusual should be evaluated by a physician.

Lake Hospital System Calendar of Events JUNE

Get Healthy Lake County Lecture/ Activity Series

Are you looking for information on how to eat better or become fit? If so, attend the Get Healthy Lake County lecture/activity series. It's designed to provide you with the health and lifestyle information you need to stay healthy. We meet monthly, except December. Call the Best of Health Line at 440-953-6000 or 1-800-454-9800 to register.

**Jack Britt Stadium, Painesville Recreation Park,
Painesville – June 4
(Running/Walking Basics)**

Free Blood Pressure Screenings

We offer free screenings to check your blood pressure between visits to your physician. Stop by our urgent care centers during regular hours (call for hours: Mentor - 255-6400; Willowick - 585-3322; Madison - 639-0726; and Chardon - 286-8908). Or come on the following dates:

LakeEast Hospital – June 6, 9 am – 12 noon

LakeWest Hospital – June 20, 9 am – 12 noon

Label Reading Tours

Discover the tricks to interpreting food labels at a FREE label-reading tour. Space is limited. Call the Best of Health Line at 440-953-6000 or 1-800-454-9800 to register.

**Giant Eagle, 36475 Euclid Ave., Willoughby –
June 1, 6:30 pm**

Get Healthy Lake County – 10,000 Steps Program

Walk your way to a healthier lifestyle - become a member of Get Healthy Lake County's 10,000 Steps Program. The surgeon general recommends 30 minutes of aerobic activity three times a week; if you walk 10,000 steps in a day (roughly five miles) you will exceed this recommendation. Every step you take counts toward the goal, so start walking today! Membership includes a pedometer, a calendar of step opportunities, a list of step equivalents, and a step log. **Call the Best of Health Line at 440-953-6000 or 1-800-454-9800 for more information.**

Good Call!

If you suffer a sports injury, call Lake Hospital System's 24/7 sports injury hotline. A sports medicine adviser will decide whether you should treat the injury yourself, go to the ER, or see your doctor. If you don't have a doctor, the adviser will arrange a next-day appointment with a physician in our sports medicine network. **1-866-247-4806**

Lake Hospital System offers a wide variety of programs for men, women, seniors and families. Please log onto www.LHS.net or call the Best of Health Line at 440-953-6000 or 1-800-454-9800 for more information.