

## Useful Health Tips

### What's the best position for sleeping?

The best way to sleep is on your side with your knees bent. You may put a pillow under your head to support your neck. You may also put a pillow between your knees.



### Proper sleeping positions

#### Mattresses

What you sleep on can also impact how comfortably you sleep. If adjusting your sleeping position doesn't help reduce pain, try adjusting your sleeping surface. Mattress firmness is an individual choice. It should not be too hard or too soft.



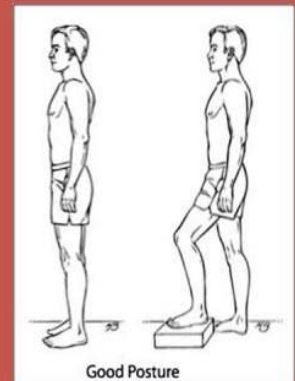
### What can I do for relief when I've hurt my lower back?



Ways to rest your back

### What's the best position for standing?

If you must stand for long periods, rest 1 foot on a low stool to relieve pressure on your lower back. Every 5 to 15 minutes, switch the foot you're resting on the stool. Maintain good posture: Keep your ears, shoulders and hips in a straight line, with your head up and your stomach pulled in.



Good Posture

### What exercises can I do to strengthen my back?



### Tips for preventing back strain

Wear flat shoes or shoes with low heels (1 inch or lower).



Exercise regularly. An inactive lifestyle contributes to lower back pain.



## What's the best position for sleeping?

- If you sleep on your back, put pillows under your knees and a small pillow under your lower back. Don't sleep on your stomach unless you put a pillow under your hips.



## What's the best way to sit?



## What else can I do for relief?

- Heating pads can help to relax painful muscle spasms. Use heat for 20 to 30 minutes at a time. Massages may also give relief.



## Low Back Pain



### Tips on Pain Relief and Prevention

## What can cause low back injuries?

- muscle strain or spasm, sprains of ligaments (which attach bone to bone), joint problems or a "slipped disk." The most common cause is using your back muscles in activities you're not used to, like lifting heavy furniture or twisting a body.
- A slipped disk (also called a herniated disk) happens when a disk between the bones of the spine bulges and presses on nerves. This is often caused by twisting while lifting.



## Tips for preventing back strain

- Push rather than pull when you must move heavy objects.
- If you must sit at your desk for long hours, break up the time with stops to stretch.



## Call your family doctor if:

- ❑ Pain goes down your leg below your knee
- ❑ Your leg, foot, groin or rectal area feels numb
- ❑ You lose control over going to the bathroom
- ❑ Your pain was caused by an injury
- ❑ Your pain is so intense you can't move around
- ❑ Your pain doesn't seem to be getting better after 2 to 3 days

