Think Back! look after yourself
Think Back when working
Think Back when lifting
Think about your Back!

Back pain is extremely common and can affect anyone at any age, but it is more frequent in people aged between 35 and 55 years old.

Think Back when working

- A lot to move? Have a break
- Turn your body try not to twist

Think Back look after yourself

- Stand tall keeping the curves in your spine
- Try to keep your weight down
- Sleep on a firm mattress
Think Back when lifting... carrying or during activity

Try not to sit too long in one position

Split big loads into smaller loads

Try to work at a height suitable for you

Sit up straight in your seat

The symptoms of simple back pain often occur without warning and can be triggered by a particular movement but it is likely the cause has been building for a while.

You are more likely to develop simple back pain if you:

- Stand badly, sit incorrectly or bend down for long periods.
- Lift, carry, push or pull loads that are too heavy.
- Trip or fall.
- Become stressed or anxious.
- Are unfit or overweight.
- Sleep on a sagging mattress.
- Generally overdoing it or begin something new.
Think Back!

Hold your head up
Keep your back straight
Bend your knees
Hold the object close
Pull in your stomach
Use your leg muscles
Stand with feet apart

Let your legs do the work and take the strain

How to prevent Back pain

There are three exercises that can be done daily to help loosen your spine. These should be done gently and remember to stop if there is any pain or discomfort.

Back Extension
- Lie face down on the floor, lift your head and shoulders by pushing up with your arms.
- Your back should become hollowed and your tummy and hips should remain in contact with the floor.
- Hold the position for 5-10 seconds then relax.
- Repeat 10 times or more if comfortable.
- This is NOT a press up.

Spine Mobility
- Stand with your feet hip distance apart, knees slightly bent. Bottom tucked under. Shoulders up and back.
- Place hands on your shoulders.
- Keep hips to the front.
- Turn the whole of the upper body to your left, return to the middle and then to the right.
- Only go as far as is comfortable.
- Repeat 6 times.

Side Bends
- Stand with your feet hip distance apart, knees slightly bent. Bottom tucked under. Shoulders up and back.
- From the waist slowly slide your left hand down to your left knee.
- Return to the middle.
- Repeat right hand to right knee.
- Only go as far as is comfortable.
- Keep your body upright (imagine standing between two sheets of glass).

Before any physical activity programme is undertaken, always seek advice from your doctor.

This advice is designed to prevent Back pain, if you experience ongoing Back pain please consult your GP or physiotherapist.
What to do when faced with something to move

Checklist

- Do I really need to move this?
- Is there a piece of equipment to use or someone else to help me?
- Is it too heavy or likely to move unexpectedly?
- If I need to reach up high or put it on the floor, then I'll need a halfway house.
- Is my route clear of obstacles, pets, shoes?
- Are my muscles strong and warmed up?
- Do I feel well and fresh?
- Are my clothes loose enough, can I move without being restricted?
- Am I wearing flat, well fitting shoes?

It is estimated that up to eight out of ten people will experience back pain lasting more than a day at some time during their life...
Think **Back** and look after yours!

*For more information or advice contact your own doctor or:*

**Health & Safety Executive**
Tel: 0845 345 0055  www.hse.gov.uk/msd/backpain

**Backcare**
Tel: 0845 130 2704  www.backcare.org.uk