

WEST COAST

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES

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Welcome!

As we are coming into the last part of the year, remember to make the most of your health fund benefits. As of January 2008 your health fund levels for OT will be renewed!

What's new in the clinic?

We have two 4th year OT students around the clinic. They will be conducting various seminars to enhance their learning. The first seminar is on Adolescent Growth Injuries. Ring or email to book in as there are limited places. Refer to the advertisement below for more information.

We have two OT's on the Saturday morning clinic for those needing Saturday appointments. We also have a speech therapist at the clinic, on a Monday and Saturday morning, please pass this on to anyone needing a speech therapist.

Adolescent Growth Injuries Seminar

When: 17th September

Time: 7pm Sharp

Where: At the clinic

Cost: Gold Coin Donation

Limited Places – Booking is essential, so be Quick!

Call 9301 0052 or email wcots@bigpond.com.au to reserve your place!

Refreshments will be provided.

Information feature: **LOW BACK PAIN**

What is Low Back Pain?

Low back pain is discomfort or pain that is experienced in the lumbar area of the spine (L1-5). It may also be experienced in the sacrum and coccyx area of the spine, which are the bones that are fused together at the base of the spine.

Low back pain is a very common problem and both men and women experience it equally. Low back pain can occur at any age, but it is most likely to occur between the ages of 35-55.

The risk of experiencing low back pain increases with age due to the muscle becoming less flexible and elastic. Sometimes children can experience low back pain due to poor posture or even carrying a backpack that is too heavy or placed incorrectly on the back.

Causes of Low Back Pain: Low back pain can be caused by a number of factors including:

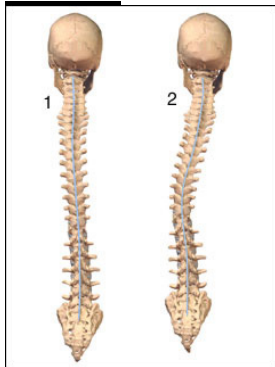
- Sprains/Strains: excessive force on the ligaments, tendons and muscles can cause irritation and inflammation of the soft tissues.
- Stress: Everyday we experience stress from a number of different factors and this creates tension in the muscles, which can lead to tight, fatigued muscles. Tight muscles are more susceptible to injury as they cannot perform their normal function of contracting and lengthening, as well as they should.
- Arthritis: Degeneration of the connective tissue between joints may lead to back pain.
- Posture: Poor posture places strain on the soft tissues and may lead to back pain.

- **Disc problem:** The discs are a spongy material that is in between each vertebrae in the spine. They are important for providing support and absorbing stress placed on the spine. Discs may bulge or herniate and place pressure on the surrounding spinal nerves causing back pain and possibly sciatica, which is pain that is felt in the low back and down into the leg or foot.
- **Osteoporosis:** Bones become less dense and more porous and therefore more vulnerable to fracture with this disease and the fracture can cause back pain.
- **Pregnancy:** Pregnancy places extra stress on the joints and soft tissues of the body.
- **Overweight:** Extra weight places extra strain on the back.
- **Structural problem:** Kyphosis (hunchback), Lordosis (an accentuated arch in the lower back) or Scoliosis (curvature of the spine)
- **Incorrect lifting techniques:** When we use incorrect lifting techniques we place unnecessary strain on the soft tissues and risk an injury occurring.

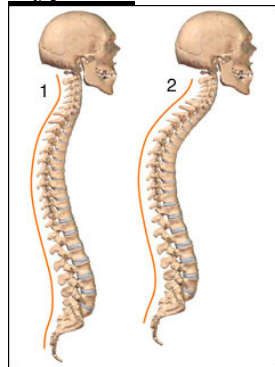
Acute Low Back Pain: Acute low back pain lasts for a shorted period, approximately 6 weeks or less.

Chronic low back pain: Low back pain is considered to be a chronic problem is it lasts for longer than 12 weeks.

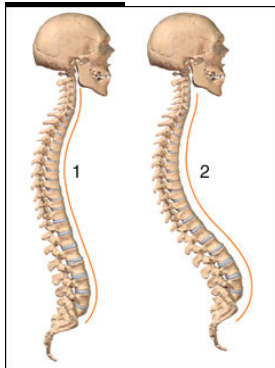
Scoliosis



Kyphosis



Lordosis



1 = Normal
2 = Structural Problem

What can you do to prevent low back pain?

- Regular exercise
- Good posture
- Use a chair with a lumbar support at work and at home
- Wear low heeled shoes
- Use correct lifting technique (ask your OT for further information)
- Occupational Therapy maintenance treatment to decrease muscle tension in your low back
- Strong Core Stability
- Regular stretching (Ask your OT for a stretching handout)

West Coast OT Clinic Products

Lumbar Support

Here at West Coast Therapy we do sell the **Archi Air Lumbar Support** which is commonly used whilst sitting, whether at work or in the car. The support is inflatable to provide the correct support for your spine.

It also features a chair strap to hold the support in place while you are away from the desk. Completely water proof with a crushed velour cover for extra comfort.

With a handy inflate/deflate system, the support is easy to slip into your desk overnight.

Price \$50.80



Thank you for using West Coast Occupational Therapy. We rely on word of mouth, so if you know of anyone who could benefit from soft tissue therapy please let them know where we are.

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