

肌肉劳损和韧带损失

肌肉和韧带是强化支撑我们背部的重要结构，沿着脊柱分布。任何肌肉韧带的劳损和撕裂都会导致疼痛。

椎管狭窄

椎管狭窄是脊柱的管腔狭窄，它会随着年龄的增长加重。如果患有椎管狭窄，即使是很轻的损害也会引起椎间盘的炎症并压迫神经。患者可以感觉到背部及沿神经走形的疼痛。通常疼痛出现在臀部、大腿或小腿，因活动加重，因休息减轻，弯腰也可以缓解疼痛。这种疼痛是椎管狭窄较特异的，常见于老年人，这种特征性表现也叫神经源性跛行。

您有没有腰痛的风险？

很多原因能使您更容易患有腰痛，包括：

- **年龄：**30岁以后，椎间盘逐渐变性、变薄，使人更易发生椎间盘突出。
- **遗传：**遗传的脊柱结构异常和遗传的腰背部疾病易感性。比如在您的家庭中，很多亲属在一定年龄都患上了腰痛。
- **较低的痛阈：**许多人存在椎间盘突出的问题，但并不是所有人都会感到疼痛。
- **关节炎：**与年龄相关的骨关节炎可以累及脊柱下段的关节。
- **生活、工作中的压力及不愉快：**这些都会增加患腰痛的风险，抑郁更会促使腰痛转为长期、慢性的问题。
- **妊娠：**妊娠时体重会重新分配，韧带也会变得松弛，使人对腰痛更易感。
- **骨质疏松症：**随着年龄的增长，特别是女性绝经后骨密度降低，致使骨头变得脆弱，因而更容易发生骨折。椎体中细小的骨折也可以导致背痛。
- **特殊作业：**一些工作，例如需要搬重东西、剧烈运动、需要躯体弯曲或者扭转动作或是长时间全身振动的工作。
- **缺少锻炼**
- **肥胖**
- **吸烟：**烟草有可能使血液循环变差。



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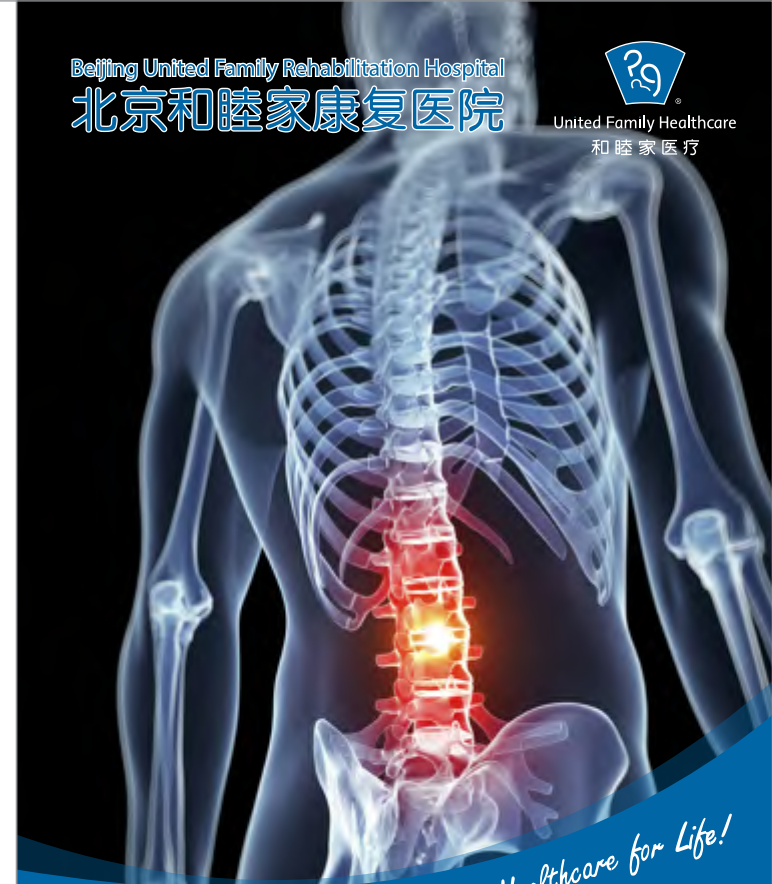


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Low Back Pain
腰痛的简介

What is low back pain?

Low back pain is a very common condition. While pain and discomfort can occur anywhere in your back, the most common site is the waist, as it supports most of your weight. Low back pain can manifest as a variety of different symptoms, such as a tingling or burning sensation, which can appear in the legs and feet, also accompanied by weakness. Low back pain can be acute, lasting less than one month; it may also be chronic, and last over 3 months. Low back pain may not necessarily happen due to one specific event – it may be from habitual bad posture, sitting or lifting heavy objects, or even bending incorrectly.

About your spine

Your spine is composed of small bones called vertebrae, which support your upper body and protect your brain and other body parts connected to the spinal cord. The vertebral column is divided into four different groups including the cervical curve, thoracic curve, lumbar curve, and the sacral curve. Between each vertebra is a disc, which plays a role in protecting and buffering the pressure the spine receives. These discs mainly consist of cartilage and water. The vertebrae and its discs are often referred to as soft tissue, providing the necessary support and strength for your daily activities. Our abdominal and chest muscles also support our back, and when they are strong, they help reduce pressure from the waist in weight distribution. Many people think that back pain is a spinal disc problem when in fact back pain is often caused by tense muscles in the soft tissue surrounding the spinal column.

What causes back pain?

The most common causes of back pain include muscle strain, disc herniation (prolapse), disc degeneration, and muscle spasms. Other less common reasons include spinal stenosis, torn ligaments in the back muscles, vertebral fractures caused by osteoporosis, and other systemic diseases.

Disc degeneration and prolapse

As we age, the discs between our vertebrae also age and wear down, just like other joints in our body. Tearing and wearing may cause inflammation, which produces pain. When disc degeneration reaches a certain point, the spaces between discs become narrow and may start to show through the column. This is known as disc prolapse.

There are great differences in the degree of disc herniation; many people may have mild prolapse, but do not have any symptoms. A herniated disc may cause severe pain, but this is not necessarily the case for every patient.

Muscle strain and torn ligaments

Muscles and ligaments are important structures located along the spine that support our back. Any type of muscle strain and torn ligament can cause pain.

Spinal stenosis

Spinal stenosis is narrowness of the lumen of spinal cord, and only grows worse with age. With spinal stenosis, even the mildest injury can cause inflammation and oppress the nerves. The pain then moves along the nerves in the back. The most common places for stenosis pain are the hips, thighs, and calves. Depending on the activity performed by a patient, bending can sometimes relieve pain. This kind of spinal stenosis occurs more often amongst the elderly and is also called neurogenic claudication.

Are you at risk for low back pain?

Many factors can cause you back pain, including:

- **Age:** After the age of 30, the spinal discs slowly change their shape and thickness, which increases the chance of spinal stenosis.
- **Genetic:** Genetically abnormal spine structure and low back disorders. For example, you have a family history of low back pain when a certain age is reached.
- **Sensation of pain is dulled:** Many people have spinal stenosis, but are not able to feel the associated pain.
- **Arthritis:** Age-related arthritis may accumulate in the lower part of the spine.
- **Stress and negative emotions from work or daily life:** This increases the risk of low back pain. Depression tends to turn back pain into a long-term, chronic problem.
- **Pregnancy:** The change in body weight, as well as looser ligaments, can cause more sensitivity to pain.
- **Osteoporosis:** Along with aging, especially after menopause, the density of bones decrease, which weakens them and may cause fractures. Mild fracture problems can lead to back pain.
- **Occupational:** Heavy lifting, intense activity, or an occupation that requires frequent bending or turning.
- **Lack of exercise.**
- **Obesity.**
- **Smoking:** Tobacco use may cause poor blood circulation.

什么是腰痛?

腰痛非常常见。疼痛及不适可以出现在您背部的任何地方，最常受累的部位在腰部，因为腰部支持了您的大部分体重。可以表现出多种症状，比如刺麻感或烧灼感，可以是钝痛或者刺痛，还可以伴有腿脚无力。腰痛可以是急性的，持续不到1个月；也可以是慢性的，持续3个月以上。腰痛不一定是由于某个急性的、明确的事件或症状引起的。如果您长期处于一些不正确的姿势，如坐姿不正或是搬重物，那么一个极简单的动作像是够东西或是弯腰，也可以导致疼痛。

了解我们的脊柱

脊柱由一组称为椎体的骨头组成，这些椎体支持着我们的上半身，并保护着连接大脑和身体其他部位的神经——脊髓。我们把椎体分为不同的组：颈椎、胸椎、腰椎、骶椎和尾椎。每两个椎体之间是椎间盘，起到保护和缓冲的作用。椎间盘的外层叫纤维环，主要是软骨成分，中心部分称为髓核，像果冻一样，含有大量的水分。椎体和椎间盘被大量的肌肉、韧带包裹。由于这些肌肉、韧带不像骨头那么坚硬，因此通常被称为软组织，它们提供了日常活动所需的支持和力量。腹部和胸部的肌肉同样支撑着我们的背部，当它们很强壮的时候，可以通过重量的再分配减少我们腰部的压力。很多人认为一出现腰痛就是脊柱和椎间盘出了问题，事实上，很多时候腰痛都是由周围肌肉软组织的紧张引起的。

导致腰痛的原因有哪些?

腰痛最常见的原因包括：肌肉劳损、椎间盘突出或脱出、椎间盘变性、肌肉痉挛。还有一些其它原因：椎管狭窄、背部肌肉韧带撕裂、骨质疏松症引起的椎体骨折、其它系统性疾病等等。

椎间盘变性、突出、脱出

随着年龄增长，椎体间的间盘变得老化，就像身体其它部位的关节一样。这种由于磨损、撕裂产生的老化可以导致炎症刺激，并产生疼痛。当椎间盘变性到一定程度，它所在的空间会变得非常窄小，髓核便会突出，这就是我们所说的椎间盘突出。椎间盘突出的程度有很大差异，很多人都有轻度的突出，而根本没有任何症状。严重的突出一般会导致疼痛，但并不一定人人如此。即使椎间盘脱出，也不是每个人都会有疼痛的。