

[IMAGE]

When Work Hurts

Whether you're lifting boxes, operating heavy machinery, or sitting at a desk all day, back pain can strike at any time. Occupational low back pain (LBP) is a major cause of disability and missed work days, and evidence implicates psychosocial factors, perhaps more significantly than biomechanical workload, in the progression and persistence of acute and chronic LBP.

As a result, many treatment programs and management strategies are adopting a multidisciplinary approach toward LBP in the workplace. Early intervention involving light mobilization and information/recommendations on their condition may be the most cost-effective method of returning patients to normal levels of activity - a premise investigated in a recent study involving 457 LBP patients. All patients were suffering from 8-12 weeks of low back pain and were randomized into two groups: an intervention group given information and advice to stay active, and a control group treated with conventional primary health care, tending toward recommendations of bedrest and reduced activity.

Patients in the intervention group had higher rates of return to full work status than patients receiving conventional care. Specifically, 51.9% of patients in the intervention group returned to full-duty work within three months vs. 35.9% of controls, and this disparity was maintained at six and 12-months follow-ups (61.2% vs. 45% within six months, 68.4% vs. 56.4% within 12 months).

Your doctor of chiropractic can provide you with more information on the potential causes and most effective methods of managing low back pain.

Reference:

Hagen EM, Eriksen JR, Ursin H. Does early intervention with a light mobilization program reduce long-term sick leave for low back pain? *Spine* 2000; Vol. 25, No. 15, pp1973-76.

For more information on back pain, go to <http://www.chiroweb.com/find/tellmeabout/backpain.html>

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