

Chronic Low Back Pain

The problem

- Pain persisting for >3 months
- Causing physical disability and psychological stress
- Increasingly common with older age

Interesting facts

- CLBP does not always have a clearly defined underlying pathological cause
- There may be underlying causes contributing to your back pain inclusive of poor posture and poor back 'habits' that leads to ongoing stress to one area of your spine
- Multidisciplinary therapy (utilising both physical and psychological interventions) has been shown to assist some people to improve their functional capacity.
- Drug therapy will not 'cure' your CLBP



What you can expect/look out for

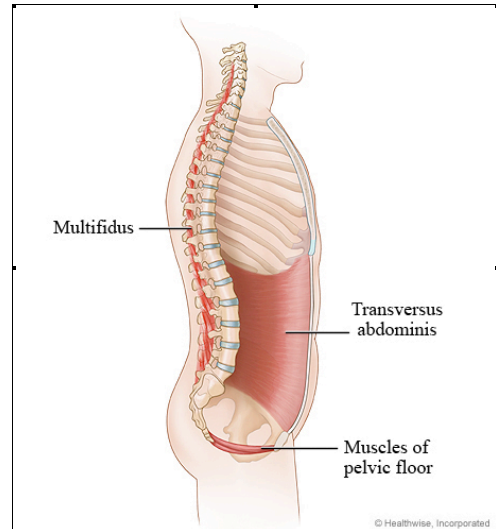
- Unfortunately outcomes are still universally poor for individual interventions for CLBP
- Be prepared for continued discomfort for a while to come

Hints for self management

- Try to stay positive. If you feel stressed discuss this with your GP. They may be able to help.
- Do not hang all your hopes on a singular treatment strategy. Evidence does not hold well that one therapy in isolation will reduce your pain.
- Stay active with regular exercise (x3/wk) that does not aggravate your pain
- Try to return to work, even if only on limited duties

Management options

- Keep discussing your issues, both physical and psychological, with your GP
- Pain Management Clinics, discuss this with your Dr
- Being more aware of your posture and the muscles that support your spine, as well as the stresses you place your spine under during the day can help your symptoms



References

- Bogduk N, **Management of chronic low back pain** MJA 2004; 180 (2): 79-83
- Chrubasik S, **Treatment of low back pain exacerbations with willow bark extract: a randomized double-blind study.** Am J Med. 2000 Jul;109(1):9-14.