



## Chronic Back Pain

Started by phrozen, Sep 29 2013 10:09 PM

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phrozen

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:09 PM

In the 9 years that I have been in the FFA, I have rarely gone the personal story route. But I figured I'd share this journey as it could be a good way to get it off my chest and see if others have had a similar experience.

I am 31 years old and I suffer from chronic back pain. It started back in 2008 and it has gotten worse every year. I probably went to the doctor 2x a year about this and I was always shrugged off, given some Rx for Flexeril, and sent on my way. I have tried several treatment options over the years and they have only made the pain worse.

2013 has been an awful year in terms of the pain. I telecommute (thankfully) 2-3 days a week and when I am in the office, the days are miserable because I cannot get comfortable and focus. It is at the point where during certain webex meetings, I am lying on the floor in my office in the decompression position because my back hurts so bad. It has impacted my job, my marriage, and my overall personal life. Additionally this year, I have noticed that my neck has started to get worse. I have a really poor range of motion and I often suffer from a stiff neck.

I moved to a new area and I started to go to a new doctor. During our first meeting earlier this month, he reviewed my medical records, checked me out, and determined that my back pain is muscular not skeletal. I have known this for a while because my upper back muscles are so tense all the time. My wife tries to massage my back and she can only do it for a couple of minutes because the pain is unbearable. My new doctor finally tried to put some on some medication to see if it helped my condition. I was given Palomar which is an older anti-depressant which was identified to help treat pain along with 10/325 Hydrocodone. I tried the Palomar for a couple of weeks and I found that the medicine made me irritable and angry so I stopped taking it last week. The Hydrocodone was so helpful for me. If my pain got really bad, I could take 1 (or 2 depending on the pain level) and it would help for 6-8 hours, which is huge. I can't express how good it felt when I was able to not think about my pain for a couple of hours and actually enjoy life. My Rx is about to run out so I called for a refill and my Doctor is refusing as he says it is not good for consistent and long term use. I totally agree that taking it for the rest of my life would be bad, but it is bittersweet because the medicine helped me live a more normal life when I was on it.

One other thing of note is I travel for my job a lot. It has been less this year but I usually average in the 75k - 100k range. Flying in a plane for 5-7 hours absolutely kills my back to almost the point of tears. I get up try to stretch but there is only so much you can do in these situations. Travel, which used to be exciting for me, has become something I dread because I am usually in pain most of the time (flights, uncomfortable hotel beds, etc.) The Hydrocodone has also been so helpful for me during my flights as I am able to endure the entire trip with minimal pain.

I am going to see the Doctor again this week to see if there is a way I can get a smaller # of refills to help with the breakthrough pain and for when I travel but I am not holding my breath as Doctors are really cracking down on giving this stuff out long term. In terms of next steps, I am working to schedule a MRI and seeing what will turn up. I have had a series of x-rays of my chest and neck before, but it hasn't shown anything because it is more muscular. I have never had an MRI before so I don't know what to expect or what type of results it will produce but I am hopeful I can get some more answers. Depending on the results, I may need back surgery or may have to go to a pain management doctor on a consistent basis to cope with the pain.

It definitely sucks being 31 with this condition as I feel lazy at times or feel that I am unable to do normal guy stuff because of my back. I am just hopeful I can find a solution because if I have to go through the rest of my life with this pain, it is going to suck big time.

Anyone else out there suffer from chronic back pain? Any tips or solutions? Appreciate the help and for listing to my rambling.

Apple Jack

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:14 PM

Not chronic, I don't, but have you tried the hang upside down contraption. Five or ten minutes on that thing always make my back feel better.

sports\_fan

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:15 PM

Are there any strengthening exercises you could do? Have you tried improving your overall fitness? A strong core supposedly helps with back pain.

phrozen

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:16 PM

*Apple Jack, on 29 Sept 2013 - 11:14 PM, said:*

Not chronic, I don't, but have you tried the hang upside down contraption. Five or ten minutes on that thing always make my back feel better.

one of my friends told me about the inversion table. I am going to try it out and see how it works and if it will help. From what he describes, it seems promising.

quickhands

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:16 PM

have you seen a podiatrist. I lived 4 years with back pain...it was from my feet. orthotics helped me

phrozen

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:18 PM

*sports\_fan, on 29 Sept 2013 - 11:15 PM, said:*

Are there any strengthening exercises you could do? Have you tried improving your overall fitness? A strong core supposedly helps with back pain.

One thing that i have found to be very helpful is when I am at the gym is to just hang from the pull up bar. It really stretches my back muscles and provides some relief. I try to do it several times during my workouts. I have started to do some strengthening exercises for my upper back. I was scared to be honest to work out my back too much because earlier in the year, if I worked it out too hard, I was in pain for 3-4 days after. I am starting out light and slow and hope to work up from there.

phrozen

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:19 PM

*quickhands, on 29 Sept 2013 - 11:16 PM, said:*

have you seen a podiatrist. I lived 4 years with back pain...it was from my feet. orthotics helped me

never considered this - I added it to my list of things to talk to my Doctor about thanks 🙏

sports\_fan

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:28 PM

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One thing that may provide some relief is Blue-Emu Analgesic Cream. You can buy it at Walmart. I sometimes have pretty bad knee pain (I've had major surgery on it twice) and this helps a little. It's not a miracle worker and I'm sure you could get something better from your doctor but it wouldn't hurt to give it a try.

Edited by sports\_fan, 29 September 2013 - 10:29 PM.

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phrozen

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:34 PM

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*sports\_fan, on 29 Sept 2013 - 11:28 PM, said:*

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I will check it out. I am desperate so any tips are appreciated. I have been using tiger balm and that is helpful.

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NutterButter

Posted 29 September 2013 - 10:37 PM

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orthotics have been huge for me. have you tried yoga? stuff is legit.

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Judge Smails

Posted 29 September 2013 - 11:29 PM

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Man, never heard of someone that young having a muscular back issue like that. Traumatic injury yes but not what you are dealing with. I would keep exhausting all non-medication options I could. Hopefully the MRI reveals some answers. Good luck man - that sucks..

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Brownsfan

Posted 29 September 2013 - 11:40 PM

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Going to a chiropractor has helped me. Sometimes having a disc out of place can create pain by pinching a nerve and the pain shows up in different areas. Try to find one that does adjustments, not a holistic one. A few treatments and you may see some relief. An MD will not recommend this, but the way I look at it is a pill can't put a bone back in place.

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gianmarco

Posted 30 September 2013 - 02:28 AM

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I had lower back pain/muscle tightness for a long, long time. At one point, my back "locked up" and I could barely move for a couple of weeks.

Know what it ended up being? Lack of stretching primarily in my hamstrings. Since I've strengthened my core and stretch almost every day, the back pain is gone. Completely. They have been so tight for so long that it affects so many different muscles, particularly in my back. This is a very common problem. It's not to say it's definitely what is causing your pain, but before you start spending time and \$ on things like chiropractors, orthotics, etc., do some reading on sacroiliac joint dysfunction and start doing some core strengthening as well as stretching.

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D\_House

Posted 30 September 2013 - 05:51 AM

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*Brownsfan, on 30 Sept 2013 - 12:40 AM, said:*

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His pain is localized to his back, both upper and lower parts. If it were a nerve root being impinged he'd have pain/numbness/weakness radiating down a limb in the pattern of the nerve's innervation.

Back pain of unknown cause is very common. Usually it resolves in a month. Nine years is a very long time to suffer.

I second the strengthening, stretching, and maintaining activity suggestions. If you are carrying extra weight, lose it. NSAIDs and other OTC pain medications when it's bad. Opiates hit the spot but are very habit-forming.

Yoga, acupuncture, seeing a chiropractor could all also help.

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Baloney Sandwich

Posted 30 September 2013 - 05:57 AM

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Google Roling and find a certified Rolfer. It is structural integration and helped me as I used to suffer from the same thing. It is pricey but I think it will change your life.

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jerseyh8r

Posted 30 September 2013 - 06:27 AM

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The reason that you are not getting a consistent answer in the thread is - unfortunately - there is no consistent answer. Science has informed us that (more often than not) after <3-6 months there is no significant deformity or physical ailment that contributes to chronic pain. In this instance, pain becomes a purely neurological phenomenon without a true "cause" out in the body somewhere that is going to be discovered by the medical community. MRIs are useless...1/2 the population has positive findings, even if without symptoms.

I would recommend a few youtube clips and a couple of books to start you on a path of understanding what the current literature is saying. These do NOT provide you with all answers, but...I can assure you that ANYONE telling you that they do have the answer for what is bothering you is just looking to take your money. NO ONE who is absolutely certain how to help is being honest.\*\*

If (in the future) you decide that you would like to pursue PT with a clinician who is well-versed in the latest research, please PM me and I would be happy to network to find someone on your behalf.

Clips:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YezBG\\_NdLgs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YezBG_NdLgs) ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YezBG\\_NdLgs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YezBG_NdLgs))

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4gmtpdwmrs> (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4gmtpdwmrs>)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3NmTE-fJSo> (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3NmTE-fJSo>)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ksNfgE3pVBw> (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ksNfgE3pVBw>)

Books

[http://www.amazon.com/Painful-Yarns-Lorimer-Moseley/dp/0979988004/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1380540258&sr=1-1&keywords=lorimer+moseley](http://www.amazon.com/Painful-Yarns-Lorimer-Moseley/dp/0979988004/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1380540258&sr=1-1&keywords=lorimer+moseley)

[http://www.amazon.com/Explain-Pain-ebook/dp/BooEQ8DCJS/ref=sr\\_1\\_5?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1380540258&sr=1-5&keywords=lorimer+moseley](http://www.amazon.com/Explain-Pain-ebook/dp/BooEQ8DCJS/ref=sr_1_5?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1380540258&sr=1-5&keywords=lorimer+moseley)

*\*\*ETA: These remarks are pointed at medical professionals who are profiting from the hopes of those in chronic pain, not individuals on a message board who are trying to be helpful*

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Edited by jerseyh8r, 30 September 2013 - 06:43 AM.

*Judge Smails, on 30 Sept 2013 - 12:29 AM, said:*

Man, never heard of someone that young having a muscular back issue like that. Traumatic injury yes but not what you are dealing with. I would keep exhausting all non-medication options I could. Hopefully the MRI reveals some answers. Good luck man - that sucks..

yeah it does suck. it was a very surreal moment when I am sitting in with my Doctor and he tells me that there is no real solution and we are going to have to explore options and hope to find a solution. The thought of having back surgery at 31 is a scary one and the thought of struggling with this for a long time isn't a good feeling as well.

another thing that I am dealing with with my ulnar nerves in both of my arms. Both nerves are not tucked under my elbow properly so because they are exposed to a degree, they hurt a lot especially when resting my arms on a chair or armrest, etc. This really sucks when I am flying because often I don't even know where to rest my arms since there is a lack of options. My Doctor prescribed a medicine called Neurontin to help and it has proven successful. Surgery is really the only option to fix this as well.

I tell my wife I feel like I am 31 going on 60. It sure feels like it most days.

*gianmarco, on 30 Sept 2013 - 03:28 AM, said:*

I had lower back pain/muscle tightness for a long, long time. At one point, my back "locked up" and I could barely move for a couple of weeks.

Know what it ended up being? Lack of stretching primarily in my hamstrings. Since I've strengthened my core and stretch almost every day, the back pain is gone. Completely. They have been so tight for so long that it affects so many different muscles, particularly in my back. This is a very common problem. It's not to say it's definitely what is causing your pain, but before you start spending time and \$ on things like chiropractors, orthotics, etc., do some reading on sacroiliac joint dysfunction and start doing some core strengthening as well as stretching.

I do need to work more on my core and I think this is good advice. For a long time, I was one of those guys in the gym that only worked out my chest, arms, back, repeat. I didn't give attention to my core or legs, which looking back was dumb. I need to invest in some core work. Do you have any exercises that worked for you?

Also I am going to be looking into a foam roller, I hear it works well but not sure how it works on backs.

*jerseyh8r, on 30 Sept 2013 - 07:27 AM, said:*

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3NmTE-fJSo> (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3NmTE-fJSo)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ksNfgE3pVBw> (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ksNfgE3pVBw)

Books

[http://www.amazon.com/Painful-Yarns-Lorimer-Moseley/dp/0979988004/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1380540258&sr=1-1&keywords=lorimer+moseley](http://www.amazon.com/Painful-Yarns-Lorimer-Moseley/dp/0979988004/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1380540258&sr=1-1&keywords=lorimer+moseley)

[http://www.amazon.com/Explain-Pain-ebook/dp/B00EQ8DCJS/ref=sr\\_1\\_5?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1380540258&sr=1-5&keywords=lorimer+moseley](http://www.amazon.com/Explain-Pain-ebook/dp/B00EQ8DCJS/ref=sr_1_5?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1380540258&sr=1-5&keywords=lorimer+moseley)

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thanks for these I will watch and take a look at the books

Keerock

Posted 30 September 2013 - 08:20 AM

I unfortunately don't have any answers for you, but I just had knee surgery, and I can 100% confirm that Hydrocodone is the ####! I'm just about out and not sure the doc will re-up my Rx 😞

phrozen

Posted 30 September 2013 - 08:25 AM

*Keerock, on 30 Sept 2013 - 09:20 AM, said:*

I unfortunately don't have any answers for you, but I just had knee surgery, and I can 100% confirm that Hydrocodone is the ####! I'm just about out and not sure the doc will re-up my Rx 😞

It is so helpful. and for me it wasn't about any high or anything like that. I had never taken it before so I had no idea what to expect. As I mentioned in the original post, I didn't feel any 'high' it just help me manage the pain for 6-8 hours which helped me feel normal. I can see why people with major back issues take it for so long because it does work.

Today I woke up with awful pain and no way I was going into the office today as being in the office takes the pain to a higher level. So I had to e-mail my boss and let her know I am telecommuting today. Currently sitting in bed with pillows supporting my back with a heating pad.

glock

Posted 30 September 2013 - 08:39 AM

*phrozen, on 29 Sept 2013 - 11:09 PM, said:*

In the 9 years that I have been in the FFA, I have rarely gone the personal story route. But I figured I'd share this journey as it could be a good way to get it off my chest and see if others have had a similar experience.

I am 31 years old and I suffer from chronic back pain. It started back in 2008 and it has gotten worse every year. I probably went to the doctor 2x a year about this and I was always shrugged off, given some Rx for Flexeril, and sent on my way. I have tried several treatment options over the years and they have only made the pain worse.

2013 has been an awful year in terms of the pain. I telecommute (thankfully) 2-3 days a week and when I am in the office, the days are miserable because I cannot get comfortable and focus. It is at the point where during certain webex meetings, I am lying on the floor in my office in the decompression position because my back hurts so bad. It has

impacted my job, my marriage, and my overall personal life. Additionally this year, I have noticed that my neck has started to get worse. I have a really poor range of motion and I often suffer from a stiff neck.

I moved to a new area and I started to go to a new doctor. During our first meeting earlier this month, he reviewed my medical records, checked me out, and determined that my back pain is muscular not skeletal. I have known this for a while because my upper back muscles are so tense all the time. My wife tries to massage my back and she can only do it for a couple of minutes because the pain is unbearable. My new doctor finally tried to put some on some medication to see if it helped my condition. I was given Palomar which is an older anti-depressant which was identified to help treat pain along with 10/325 Hydrocodone. I tried the Palomar for a couple of weeks and I found that the medicine made me irritable and angry so I stopped taking it last week. The Hydrocodone was so helpful for me. If my pain got really bad, I could take 1 (or 2 depending on the pain level) and it would help for 6-8 hours, which is huge. I can't express how good it felt when I was able to not think about my pain for a couple of hours and actually enjoy life. My Rx is about to run out so I called for a refill and my Doctor is refusing as he says it is not good for consistent and long term use. I totally agree that taking it for the rest of my life would be bad, but it is bittersweet because the medicine helped me live a more normal life when I was on it.

One other thing of note is I travel for my job a lot. It has been less this year but I usually average in the 75k - 100k range. Flying in a plane for 5-7 hours absolutely kills my back to almost the point of tears. I get up try to stretch but there is only so much you can do in these situations. Travel, which used to be exciting for me, has become something I dread because I am usually in pain most of the time (flights, uncomfortable hotel beds, etc.) The Hydrocodone has also been so helpful for me during my flights as I am able to endure the entire trip with minimal pain.

I am going to see the Doctor again this week to see if there is a way I can get a smaller # of refills to help with the breakthrough pain and for when I travel but I am not holding my breath as Doctors are really cracking down on giving this stuff out long term. **In terms of next steps, I am working to schedule a MRI and seeing what will turn up.** I have had a series of x-rays of my chest and neck before, but it hasn't shown anything because it is more muscular. I have never had an MRI before so I don't know what to expect or what type of results it will produce but I am hopeful I can get some more answers. Depending on the results, I may need back surgery or may have to go to a pain management doctor on a consistent basis to cope with the pain.

It definitely sucks being 31 with this condition as I feel lazy at times or feel that I am unable to do normal guy stuff because of my back. I am just hopeful I can find a solution because if I have to go through the rest of my life with this pain, it is going to suck big time.

Anyone else out there suffer from chronic back pain? Any tips or solutions? Appreciate the help and for listing to my rambling.

This. SO this.

How this went on so long without an MRI being prescribed, I dunno. Maybe easy for me to say with my back issues a workers comp/disability gig, but wow. I have a cocktail of hydrocodone, muscle relaxers and anti-inflammatories for my "episodes" which are now fairly few and far between but no less severe. But you can't eat that stuff all of the time.

Hopefully the MRI will get to the core of your back pain. Was there no "trigger" event? Nothing??

gianmarco

Posted 30 September 2013 - 08:41 AM

*phrozen, on 30 Sept 2013 - 09:08 AM, said:*

*gianmarco, on 30 Sept 2013 - 03:28 AM, said:*

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I do need to work more on my core and I think this is good advice. For a long time, I was one of those guys in the gym that only worked out my chest, arms, back, repeat. I didn't give attention to my core or legs, which looking back was dumb. I need to invest in some core work. Do you have any exercises that worked for you?

Also I am going to be looking into a foam roller, I hear it works well but not sure how it works on backs.

There are lots you can do. Just keep it simple. Push-ups, sit-ups, crunches, planks (normal and side), leg raises. Nothing fun, but doesn't take long to do and they help with EVERYTHING.

But, just as important is just plain old stretching. And this will take a while (much longer than what you're used to with any type of strength or muscle building). If you really want to see an improvement, it has to be done *every single day*. For me, it was my hips/hamstrings/groin. Again, it's not anything groundbreaking but it makes such a huge difference. I actually do a lot of my stretching in the shower. It reminds me to do it each day and doesn't take long. Even just bending over and getting my hands to the floor does wonders. And, as much as I've done over the last couple years (which isn't anything special but is 1000% more than I did before), I still find that I can't initially touch until I let the muscles relax and stretch. No wonder I ended up where I was as I hadn't stretched in years.

In all seriousness, if there's one thing I'm going to impart on my son is to learn how to stretch/remain flexible and make it a part of a daily routine. You take for granted how easily and quickly the body can start to break down. I remember how good I used to feel in my early 20's, playing sports and doing whatever I wanted. Now, in my 30's, I feel like an old man. I'd wake up sore every morning. Things would get hurt easier and take much longer to heal. Now, I feel better in my later 30's than I have for the last 10 years.

I started doing karate with my son a couple years ago and that was what prompted this and where I actually do most of these exercises. When I realized how much better I was feeling, I started doing some more on my own as well. Between losing some weight, core strengthening, and working on flexibility, I no longer wake up sore. I can sit on the floor and not ache. I couldn't even sit with crossed legs comfortably before and now it's easy. I'm more conscious of my posture. And I would get muscle spasms and knots all over my back constantly and that no longer happens. In fact, when my lower back starts to hurt at all, I start doing some stretching immediately and it's gone. FWIW, it was all my hip (SI joint) that was causing all of my back pain. And it was my tight hamstrings that was causing my hips to hurt. It is all connected, literally and figuratively.

Again, this is not to say this is definitely your issue, but it's very likely a contributing cause (if not the sole cause). I've had 3 friends already with similar symptoms that have also completely gone away with some simple stretching. I also did all this without any foam rollers or orthotics (although I did entertain and read about the foam rollers and considered giving it a shot).

Good luck and keep us updated.

phrozen

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*phrozen, on 30 Sept 2013 - 09:48 AM, said:*

*glock, on 30 Sept 2013 - 09:39 AM, said:*

*phrozen, on 29 Sept 2013 - 11:09 PM, said:*

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I am 31 years old and I suffer from chronic back pain. It started back in 2008 and it has gotten worse every year. I probably went to the doctor 2x a year about this and I was always shrugged off, given some Rx for Flexeril, and sent on my way. I have tried several treatment options over the years and they have only made the pain worse.

2013 has been an awful year in terms of the pain. I telecommute (thankfully) 2-3 days a week and when I am in the office, the days are miserable because I cannot get comfortable and focus. It is at the point where during certain webex meetings, I am lying on the floor in my office in the decompression position because my back hurts so bad. It has impacted my job, my marriage, and my overall personal life. Additionally this year, I have noticed that my neck has started to get worse. I have a really poor range of motion and I often suffer from a stiff neck.

I moved to a new area and I started to go to a new doctor. During our first meeting earlier this month, he reviewed my medical records, checked me out, and determined that my back pain is muscular not skeletal. I have known this for a while because my upper back muscles are so tense all the time. My wife tries to massage my back and she can only do it for a couple of minutes because the pain is unbearable. My new doctor finally tried to put some on some medication to see if it helped my condition. I was given Palomar which is an older anti-depressant which was identified to help treat pain along with 10/325 Hydrocodone. I tried the Palomar for a couple of weeks and I found that the medicine made me irritable and angry so I stopped taking it last week. The Hydrocodone was so helpful for me. If my pain got really bad, I could take 1 (or 2 depending on the pain level) and it would help for 6-8 hours, which is huge. I can't express how good it felt when I was able to not think about my pain for a couple of hours and actually enjoy life. My Rx is about to run out so I called for a refill and my Doctor is refusing as he says it is not good for consistent and long term use. I totally agree that taking it for the rest of my life would be bad, but it is bittersweet because the medicine helped me live a more normal life when I was on it.

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Long time L4-5 herniated disc back patient here who used to listen to my dad get adjustments back in the early days of chiropractic in the '70's and was scarred for life by the sounds... 🙄

I have never been to a chiropractor, but have done traction and loads of PT after "episodes" to get me back on track. I know that when my core weakens and I am not being vigilant I am in a vulnerable position.

phrozen

Posted 30 September 2013 - 09:01 AM

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There is a more aggressive treatment that you might want to look into since you haven't found any solutions yet. There are several medical companies (St. Jude Medical, Medtronic and Boston Scientific) that have a pain management system that involves placing some wires along your spinal cord and you have a remote device to dial up the stimulation that blocks the pain. This might be especially useful when you are flying.

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No surgery. My orthopedic guy has mad it all about pain management for me. I have some left leg sciatica and numbness but only get full blown back outages every 4 years or so with a couple of minor ones mixed in. It IS kind of bizarre, actually.

I do have siblings who have opted for back surgery: one- a nurse- who was in really bad shape and the other- a physical beast who runs his own electrical business- who is just reeally impatient.

My doc tells me that when I can't handle it anymore- that's when surgery goes on the table. Until then he tells me to keep on doing what I'm doing- keep weight in check, stay active and as flexible as possible. And don't make stupid moves like bending from the waist to slide a cast iron griddle along the ground. 🤪

kutta

Posted 30 September 2013 - 10:25 AM

I second the notion of strength training. I had some pretty bad back pain for a couple years. During that time I was getting lazy and putting on some lbs. Once i started lifting again the back pain was gone in a few weeks and it never came back. Mine was in my lower back, so it sounds different from what you are going through, but you should try some core exercises and see if that helps.

Workhorse

Posted 30 September 2013 - 10:30 AM

Might want to look into TMS (Tension Myositis Syndrome) and Dr John Sarno. Reading his books about mind/body connection and how it relates to chronic pain has really helped my back issues. Give it a shot.

Bonzai

Posted 30 September 2013 - 10:30 AM

One thing that really helped me was getting a good office chair and working ergonomically. Posture was such a big deal in helping my back feel better. As others have said, stretching/yoga was also really, really important too.

Jayrok

Posted 30 September 2013 - 12:06 PM

DMSO cream or roll-on will help with muscle pain and/or inflammation.

MACE

Posted 30 September 2013 - 12:14 PM

This discovery is really for Lower Back pain, but I figure passing it on can't hurt.

<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/may/07/antibiotics-cure-back-pain-patients>

To treat my lower back pain issues, I have become more flexible (10 minutes stretching EVERY morning), sitting on the below "cushion" at work and in the car for my daily commute

<http://www.backjoy.com/backjoy/pages/product/detail.grid?b-id=BackJoyRelief>

Good luck

TheIronSheik

Posted 30 September 2013 - 12:27 PM

I gained all of my weight from having a bad back. It hurt to do anything.

I've been getting injections in my back for the past year. Also had something called Denervation (or something of the like) done where they went in with a soldering iron and burned the nerves in my back away. I'm still not 100% but for the first time in about 5 years I can do almost everything I used to be able to do.

jerseyh8r

Posted 30 September 2013 - 04:20 PM

*glock, on 30 Sept 2013 - 09:39 AM, said:*

*phrozen, on 29 Sept 2013 - 11:09 PM, said:*

**...In terms of next steps, I am working to schedule a MRI and seeing what will turn up...**

This. SO this.

MRIs are notoriously bad for chronic pain sufferers. They find things that are not necessarily the problem (for example 50% of a healthy population will have a positive "finding" on an MRI), yet surgeon's think that this is where they need to cut anyway. Meanwhile, surgical outcomes for many chronic pains (low back in particular) are no better than conservative care a couple of years out.

Again...good luck. I hope some of the materials I linked are helpful.

*Edited by jerseyh8r, 30 September 2013 - 04:21 PM.*

Dragons

Posted 30 September 2013 - 09:49 PM

*gianmarco, on 30 Sept 2013 - 09:48 AM, said:*

[This is a great read and can help clarify if this is the issue \(http://www.do-it-yourself-joint-pain-relief.com/sacroiliac-joint-pain-relief.html\)](http://www.do-it-yourself-joint-pain-relief.com/sacroiliac-joint-pain-relief.html)

Thanks for this. I hurt my back bad (felt like I ruptured a disc) moving wood after hurricane sandy last year. I recovered initially, but had some set backs and over the past few months I've been really sore. My son even told his pre-school teacher that I haven't been going to work and am at home in bed with a bad back (not true, I haven't missed work, even though there has been days I wanted to).

I can't figure out the right finger/hand stretch method myself yet, but my wife worked on both thighs tonight and it lessened the pain considerably for awhile. I didn't even realize it could be related to tight leg muscles. I'm going to keep working at it, see if I can relieve the pain for good.

Just Win Baby

Posted 30 September 2013 - 10:18 PM

My wife has been suffering from intractable chronic back pain for the past 15 years. Hers originated from a 1987 car accident, and she has had 8 major spinal surgeries. Over the years, she has tried acupuncture, chiropractor, electrical stimulation, physical therapy, and deep tissue massage, with little success from any of those. She has been on very high dosage pain meds throughout that period, and could not function without them, but they definitely come with plenty of serious negative side effects.

First and foremost, if you don't already have a quality pain management specialist, you need to get one. My wife has had several over the years, and there is a broad spectrum in the quality of care she has received.

While she has a fused spine and significant nerve damage, much of her pain is muscle pain caused by the strain of her back muscles trying to straighten out her skewed spine/posture. A few things have helped her with muscle pain that have not been mentioned:

1. Botox injections in her back. Just as botox relaxes your facial muscles to relieve wrinkles, it can also relax back muscles. She gets these every 10 weeks or so.
2. Ketamine injections in her back. She gets these every 3 weeks.
3. Trigger point injections in her back. This is different from botox and ketamine. She gets these every 10 weeks or so.
4. CAT guided injections. We have to travel from Virginia Beach to Duke for this, because no one does it in our area. Using the CAT to guide the injection allows the doctor to get the needle right up to inflamed nerve roots and bathe them with medication. She gets these every 3-4 months.



Note that it is very possible that many insurance plans would not approve some or all of these treatments. At times, we have had to obtain doctor justifications to obtain pre-approvals.

Another thing that helps is marijuana. She tried it a couple of years ago and now uses it semi-regularly. Unfortunately, it's not legal in our state, but she is able to get it through friends. It is one of a handful of reasons that we are considering moving to California.

There have been many posts about exercise and stretching. Unfortunately, my wife's ability to exercise is extremely limited, but she has found that doing physical therapy exercises in a pool is the most helpful for her.

Good luck, hope some of this is helpful.

Edited by Just Win Baby, 01 October 2013 - 01:12 PM.

Judge Smails

Posted 01 October 2013 - 12:16 AM

*gianmarco, on 30 Sept 2013 - 03:28 AM, said:*

I had lower back pain/muscle tightness for a long, long time. At one point, my back "locked up" and I could barely move for a couple of weeks.

Know what it ended up being? Lack of stretching primarily in my hamstrings. Since I've strengthened my core and stretch almost every day, the back pain is gone. Completely. They have been so tight for so long that it affects so many different muscles, particularly in my back. This is a very common problem. It's not to say it's definitely what is causing your pain, but before you start spending time and \$ on things like chiropractors, orthotics, etc., do some reading on sacroiliac joint dysfunction and start doing some core strengthening as well as stretching.

Great posting. I used to wreck my lower back all of the time golfing. I would do an hour of cardio and not stretch. Hamstrings were TIGHT. I know stretch my hamstrings, hip flexors, etc religiously along with core work and haven't had an injury in 4 years. Stretching and core work is mandatory if you want to even walk normally as you get older.

ImTheScientist

Posted 01 October 2013 - 12:33 AM

*phrozen, on 29 Sept 2013 - 11:09 PM, said:*

Anyone else out there suffer from chronic back pain? Any tips or solutions? Appreciate the help and for listing to my rambling.

Same problem, and I also travel a lot. Yoga actually helps me .... wasn't so hot on the idea then my wife convinced me to go take a class with her. You may want to give it a try.

phrozen

Posted 01 October 2013 - 09:04 AM

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Thanks for posting this. My heart goes out to your wife as I can't even imagine the pain she has experienced over the last 15 years. And I know it has to greatly impact you as well, as you have to watch your wife suffer, care for her often, and totally adjust your plans around her pain. I think what the spouse has to deal with often gets forgotten when the other has major pain.

While I have never smoked marijuana a day in my life, I support its full legalization across the country especially medical marijuana. I know of its medical benefits to help ease suffering and pain, and it was ever prescribed to me down the line, I would utilize it 100%.

In terms of the pain management specialist, I will be discussing this with my Doctor on Thursday. In addition to getting the MRI, I want to start seeing a pain management specialist because this will be helpful for my long-term health and wellness. This was a suggestion he offered as well so I think this will be an easy one to get set up.

I will keep all of these treatments in mind too especially as the next weeks and months occur.

In terms of the pain medicine, I know where your wife is coming from. This was my first exposure to Hydrocodone and as I mentioned in my original post, it was amazing in how much it helped me function normally. My doctor refused my refill initially, but we exchanged emails only so he is missing a lot of the context. Also since my last appointment was his first time seeing me, I have not been able to go into detail about my pain, which is something I will address on Thursday. I understand the medicine is not for long-term use but it is going to be essential for short-term relief of my breakthrough pain over the next weeks and months as we explore other options.

phrozen

Posted 01 October 2013 - 09:14 AM

so yesterday sucked balls. sunday night, my back hurt so bad that I got about 3 hours of sleep. In the morning, my back pain was so bad that I had to call out of work and stay home to rest. This has been the second time in 2 weeks that I have had to call out of work and the trend is discouraging. my day consisted of crushing ibuprofen, laying in bed with a heating pad, and trying to do minor stretching throughout the day. My neck also really hurt as well so I was dealing with pain in two different fronts. I forgot to mention that I did receive an x-ray of my neck and what resulted is I have some disc space narrowing at C3/C4 but I am not sure it is related to my back pain.

It should be an interesting appointment with my Doctor on Thursday. I will not leave there without a treatment plan for the next couple of weeks/months (including seeing a pain management specialist) and hydrocodone to help get through the weeks/months until the long-term solution is (hopefully) identified.

Thanks again for all of your support. The FFA never ceases to amaze me as a community of people that take the time to share and encourage one another with the occasional ball busting sprinkled in there 😊.

Just Win Baby

Posted 01 October 2013 - 01:11 PM

*phrozen, on 01 Oct 2013 - 10:04 AM, said:*

Thanks for posting this. My heart goes out to your wife as I can't even imagine the pain she has experienced over the last 15 years. And I know it has to greatly impact you as well, as you have to watch your wife suffer, care for her often, and totally adjust your plans around her pain. I think what the spouse has to deal with often gets forgotten when the other has major pain.

Thanks. Our whole life has been centered around and limited by her health issues, and it always will be. When it first started, we had a mindset along the lines of "we'll put this off until she is back to normal." Eventually, we realized she will never be back to anything close to normal, and we just have to accept that and make the best of it. That was a very sobering realization.

*phrozen, on 01 Oct 2013 - 10:04 AM, said:*

In terms of the pain management specialist, I will be discussing this with my Doctor on Thursday. In addition to getting the MRI, I want to start seeing a pain management specialist because this will be helpful for my long-term health and wellness. This was a suggestion he offered as well so I think this will be an easy one to get set up.

This is very good. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to have a pain specialist treat serious pain such as yours. Other doctors can prescribe meds and treatments, but it is not their specialty.

*phrozen, on 01 Oct 2013 - 10:04 AM, said:*

In terms of the pain medicine, I know where your wife is coming from. This was my first exposure to Hydrocodone and as I mentioned in my original post, it was amazing in how much it helped me function normally. My doctor refused my refill initially, but we exchanged emails only so he is missing a lot of the context. Also since my last appointment was his first time seeing me, I have not been able to go into detail about my pain, which is something I will address on Thursday. I understand the medicine is not for long-term use but it is going to be essential for short-term relief of my breakthrough pain over the next weeks and months as we explore other options.

I understand that for most people, it is desirable to avoid long term use of opioid pain meds. But I also know for a fact that there are a lot of misconceptions out there, including in the medical community, about long term use of pain meds. There have not been nearly enough studies to support many of the views that are prevalent. My wife has been on several opioid meds at very high dosage for more than a decade. She literally could not live without them. For some chronic pain sufferers, the biases against pain meds are actually harmful to their well being. If this subject interests you, here is a link to a discussion from earlier this year: <http://updates.pain-...old-turkey.html> (<http://updates.pain-topics.org/2013/04/will-pain-patients-be-going-cold-turkey.html>).

Edited by Just Win Baby, 01 October 2013 - 01:13 PM.

glock

Posted 01 October 2013 - 01:45 PM

*jerseyh8r, on 30 Sept 2013 - 5:20 PM, said:*

*glock, on 30 Sept 2013 - 09:39 AM, said:*

*phrozen, on 29 Sept 2013 - 11:09 PM, said:*

**...In terms of next steps, I am working to schedule a MRI and seeing what will turn up...**

This. SO this.

MRIs are notoriously bad for chronic pain sufferers. They find things that are not necessarily the problem (for example 50% of a healthy population will have a positive "finding" on an MRI), yet surgeons think that this is where they need to cut anyway. Meanwhile, surgical outcomes for many chronic pains (low back in particular) are no better than conservative care a couple of years out.

Again...good luck. I hope some of the materials I linked are helpful.

Notice that I said that I opted not to have surgery and make use of conservative care instead. 😊

MRI's are a good place to start when it is apparent that there is something structural amiss...

PIK95

Posted 01 October 2013 - 01:50 PM

I don't have time to read all of this but unless you had an MRI you can't be sure it's not a disc. Try Bio freeze (get it from Dr, PT, or Chiro) for back muscles. It will work wonders if it's just muscle. If you still have problems make sure you use Ibuprofen on a regular basis. Make sure you take some fiber with beans, Ibu, or any of the pills you are poppin or else roids will be in your future also. Good luck.

glock

Posted 01 October 2013 - 02:17 PM

*Just Win Baby, on 01 Oct 2013 - 2:11 PM, said:*

*phrozen, on 01 Oct 2013 - 10:04 AM, said:*

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Where do you live? My sister did a number on her lower back as a nurse and surgery was most definitely not a cure all. Her injury cost her both her livelihood and her marriage. She got involved in experimental pain management and worked really hard not to use drugs to get by. After researching the effects of climate on injuries like hers, she decided to pick up and leave the northeast- bought a camper and drove out to Sedona, AZ. Her transformation over time has been nothing short of amazing. She eventually got into small theatre and met her new husband. While she still has to work at her fitness/core to maintain, she recently moved to VA and is doing great! Food for thought.

Dentist

Posted 01 October 2013 - 02:35 PM

For what it's worth, I had it when i was probably 26/27.. about 2 years straight.. tried the inversion tables... no luck.. and i was in better shape and thinner than i am now.

It took years, but i ultimately discovered it was the chair I sat in that hit me in all the wrong ways.

I was playing a decent amount of online poker at home and logging a lot of chair hours. I took a few weeks off online poker after some disgusting hands where I was a 90% favorite and lost, and wasn't using that chair and was instead using my couch.

It took a bit to put 2 and 2 together, but I scrapped the chair, got a new one and haven't looked back to my pain free life.

I had analyzed EVERYTHING.. work posture, exercised the proper muscles... everything short of going to an actual medical doctor/chiropractor/acupuncturist and using prescription narcotics like vicodin I had done.

This was the solution.. it was easy and painless.

Before i did surgery, I'd look into my shoes, my chairs I sit in at work/home, do the proper exercises, and do some reading on ergonomics.

CHAIRS matter!

TheIronSheik

Posted 01 October 2013 - 02:41 PM

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This was my cause, too. My office chair was one of those chairs that leaned back. But it leaned back no matter what. As soon as I sat in it, it leaned slightly back. And that caused me to lean forward. Once I got rid of that chair, the pain stopped progressively getting worse. But not before I had two herniated disks.

My new job had that same kind of chair and I told them to get bent. They got me a new chair, but I had to use that one while I waited for the new one and I could actually feel the pain start to come back. Chairs make all the difference in the world.