

# Underlying medical conditions that may cause back pain



## Medical conditions that can cause back pain

Wearing supportive shoes, maintaining good posture, exercising and eating a healthy diet can all help avoid back pain, however, sometimes back pain isn't preventable.

Lower back pain can also be a symptom of an underlying medical condition. In fact, back pain could be the only indication you have one of the following conditions:<sup>1</sup>

- **Abdominal aortic aneurysms** occur when the large blood vessel that supplies blood to your abdomen, pelvis, and legs becomes abnormally enlarged; back pain can be a symptom that the aneurysm is becoming larger and could rupture.
- **Cauda equina syndrome** is a rare complication of a ruptured disc in which disc material is pushed into your spinal canal and compresses the bundle of your lumbar and sacral nerve roots, causing loss of bladder and bowel control. Permanent neurological damage may result if left untreated.
- **Infections** can cause pain when they involve your vertebrae, intervertebral discs or the sacroiliac joints connecting your lower spine to your pelvis.
- **Kidney stones** can cause sharp pain in your lower back, usually on one side.
- **Tumours** can occasionally begin in the back, but more often, they appear in the back because of cancer that has spread from somewhere else in your body.



### Remember:

Don't take back pain lightly. If you have ongoing pain, be sure to talk with your doctor.



Sources:

1. National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. Low Back Pain Fact Sheet, July 15, 2022. Available from [www.ninds.nih.gov](http://www.ninds.nih.gov).

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