

# Low Back Pain

The vertebrae in your lower back are larger than in any other part of your spine. Vertebrae are the series of bones that align to form your spine. The spinal section in your lower back is called the lumbar spine. The vertebrae are bigger in the lumbar spine because they must support the weight of your upper body. They also withstand powerful forces from the lower back muscles. These strong muscles are attached to the lumbar vertebrae and are used during lifting, bending, and twisting activities.

**Low back pain** is very common. Muscle, ligament, nerve, and spine injuries are frequent causes of low back pain. Poor posture during movements and “wear and tear” can also cause low back pain. Degenerative diseases, such as arthritis, can cause the spinal structures to break down and put pressure on the spinal cord or nerves. Nerve pressure in the lumbar spine can cause symptoms to spread to the buttocks, legs, and feet. This is because the nerves that exit the spinal cord at the lumbar spine travel to these areas.

A medical examination is necessary to identify the cause of low back pain in order to determine the appropriate course of treatment. The majority of people with low back pain find relief with non-surgical treatments. However, for a small number of people with low back pain, symptoms progress or persist, and surgery can be an effective treatment.