# Wellness News Network™

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## Low Back Pain – Your #1 Reason to see a Chiropractor

Presented by: **Total Health Systems** **TotalHealthSystems.com**

For over a hundred years, people have been seeking chiropractors to help them with their backs. Of all the reasons to see a chiropractor, the most common is for lower back pain. It is no wonder: recent estimates show that up to 80% of the North American population will experience disabling back pain at some point in their lives and approximately 31 million are likely to be experiencing back pain as you read this!![1]

Altogether, there are 24 vertebrae in your spine: 7 cervical, 12 thoracic and 5 lumbar. The sacrum and coccyx are also considered part of your spine, but they comprise the tailbone area that connects the spine to your pelvis.

The spine serves three main functions: 1) structural foundation (it is your body's back-bone!); 2) functional movements in all directions of your torso; and 3) protection of a very sensitive and important nerve tissue – the spinal cord. In order to perform all three of these crucial functions the spine must be stable, strong, and at the same time, flexible. This is why chiropractic is so important - to help you maintain a healthy balance in all three areas!

### Why is the lower back so susceptible to injury?

Of all the vertebrae, the ones in your lower back experience the greatest loads. Like the trunk of a tree, the lumbar spine provides support for the rest of the body whenever it is in an upright position. This is one of the main reasons why the lower back will require your chiropractor's attention.

### Postural Strain:

The lower back curve (lumbar lordosis) sets the spine in the right position and the rest of the spine is designed to follow its lead when in a vertical position. Therefore, whenever conditions in the body threaten proper postural alignment (i.e. excessive weight in the stomach area, 'slumped' upper back posture), the powerful lower back muscles will be called upon to correct for these deviations.

**QUESTION:**
**What % of North Americans will experience back pain at some point**

A) 50%
B) 65%
C) 80%

**ANSWER:**
C) 80%

**TRUE OR FALSE:**
**There are 25 vertebrae in your spine**

**ANSWER:**
False – there are 24

**QUESTION:**
**Which conditions can occur due to prolonged stress to the lower back?**

A) joint irritation
B) nerve impingement
C) disc bulges
D) all of the above

**ANSWER:**
D) all of the above


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If they are put under an abnormal amount of stress and strain for an extended period, this will not only negatively affect the muscles themselves (muscle strain and spasm), but can also contribute to a greater likelihood of vertebral subluxations, joint irritation, disc bulges and nerve impingement - all from greater compressive loads put on the lower back.

## Disc Herniations:

In between each neighboring vertebra, there are intervertebral discs - soft tissue "cushions" that allow for individual vertebral movement, while at the same time absorbing a large degree of vertical load exerted on the spine. Although they are quite robust in the lumbar spine, these discs are very susceptible to bulge, tear or herniate because of all the variable forces they will experience from day to day. Because of the orientation of the joints in the lower back, the lumbar spine is designed to provide for a great deal of spinal flexion and extension (bending forward and backward).

This is why bending and twisting at the same time is not recommended as it goes against nature's design and exposes those soft tissue discs to a lot of unnecessary shearing forces. If the integrity of the disc is compromised by these movements, the resulting injury can lead to distortion of the disc itself (disc bulge), plus inflammation, both of which may irritate the nerves as they exit the spine. In addition, if the disc loses its natural shape, this can distort the alignment of the lumbar spine, leading to vertebral subluxations. Chiropractic care has been shown to be very effective at times in the treatment of spinal problems caused by disc herniations.[2,3]

## Vertebral subluxations:

When the individual vertebrae are not aligned and/or functioning properly, this is what a chiropractor refers to as the "vertebral subluxation." When a vertebra is subluxated, it can lead to abnormal stress and strain on any and all of the pain-sensitive tissues mentioned above. Alignment is the true key to spinal health, and the chiropractic adjustment is the one tool specifically designed to maintain spinal alignment. If you are experiencing any lower back discomfort, the first person you should call is your chiropractor! Chiropractic care is not only beneficial for the short term,[3,4] but regular maintenance care is highly recommended for long-term relief too.[5]

## Quote to Inspire

*"Much of your pain is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self. "*

*- Kahlil Gibran*

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