



## 6 Keys to Eliminate Your Back Pain

*You or either someone you love is in pain. As you know, it can really affect your daily life and being able to go out to do the things you love. I have been there plenty of times and know how frustrating it can be to miss out on life because of back pain.*

*I have done physical therapy, chiropractic, yoga... and the list goes on. All of them provided some level of relief, but nothing I tried seemed to make a difference for more than a week.*

*Important to understand that if you have tried one or two of these before, do not give up on the whole list, or you are missing the point. You need to take multiple systems of your body at once if you are going to make a difference in your pain. I encourage you to do as many as possible to give yourself the best chance for recovery.*

*(NOTE: If any of these cause more pain, if your pain becomes more severe or is not getting better, stop immediately and talk to your doctor.)*

### #1 Meditation

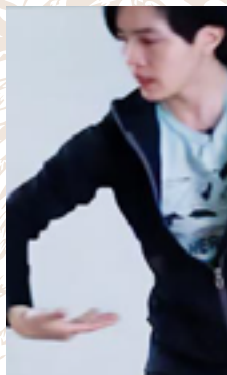


I bet you didn't think this would be number 1.

Meditation is #1 on this list for a reason: The science is overwhelmingly clear that mindfulness meditation is an effective approach for pain relief. In fact, it has been shown that similar brain areas are activated by mindfulness meditation and opioid use (but without the negative side effects, and with more long-lasting results).

Think of this as your best and safest way to directly affect the sensitivity of your nervous system. Not sure where to begin? Try apps like **Headspace**, **Calm** or **Insight Timer**. I personally like Headspace since a British guy talking to me is always calming. You can also try looking up "mindfulness meditation" on YouTube where you can find ones with specific calming frequencies as well.

### #2 Stretching, Movement or Qigong Exercises



Bed rest used to be prescribed for back pain, but we know better now. Any tissue in your body requires fresh blood flow to function and heal, including your nerves and joints. In order to get blood flow to your back, you are going to have to get moving.

This is going to mean different things for different people – depending on your level of fitness and pain, this could mean prioritizing a walk around the block every day, or doing simple physical therapy exercises. If you move the least while you are at work, it could mean setting a timer for every 30 minutes to get up and do some movements (like some qigong exercise) to get the blood moving. Play around with this and see what feels the best for you.

*How much movement do you need to prevent your back from getting stiff and tight?*



### #3 Hydration



So remember how all of that tissue needs blood flow to function properly? What is blood made of, more than anything? Water! Actually, so much of our joints need water to help with lubrication. Another image to have in your mind is that of beef jerky. Beef jerky has as much liquid removed as possible and how flexible does that look?

The same goes for the muscles in your back – they require water to perform like they should and maintain their elasticity. When muscles become dehydrated, they become rigid, inflexible and much more likely to spasm which means much more pain for you. The rule of thumb is to take your body weight (e.g. 150 pounds), divide it in half and drink that much in ounces every day (e.g. 75 ounces). If you are sweating a lot or drinking coffee or alcohol (diuretics) you will probably need to drink more than that.

### #4 Get Bodywork / Massage



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### #5 Get Acupuncture



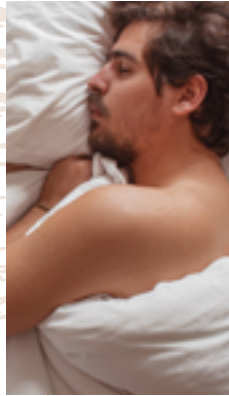
The prospect of getting acupuncture can be scary for some, but the pins acupuncturists use are so small that you will hardly feel them. And the results are remarkable, particularly for back pain. Acupuncture has been proven over and over to be an effective way at increasing blood flow to damaged tissue, increasing endogenous opioids in your body that help relieve pain and effectively lowering inflammation and activation of sensory nerves.

The result is all natural pain relief and faster tissue healing without side effects. Make sure you go to a Licensed Acupuncturist to receive acupuncture.

Physical therapists, chiropractors and MDs are all able to practice a form of acupuncture called dry needling, which is not the same and can be counter-productive in some cases.



## #6 Get Sleep



Getting enough sleep can be especially difficult for some. If you are not getting sleep because you are in pain, you are going to be in more pain because you are not getting enough sleep. It turns into a vicious cycle. Try experimenting with different sleep positions.

For back pain, lying on your side with a pillow between your legs can give more support to the pelvis. You could also try lying on your back in a reclined, but not fully horizontal position.

Engaging in relaxing activities before bed (hot shower/bath, meditation, reading) can also help reduce the activation of your nervous system causing you to be in less pain and feel sleepier.



**\*\* The content is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, or cure your condition. It is not intended to replace a one-on-one relationship with a qualified health care professional and is not intended as medical advice. Please consult with your medical professional if you have questions.**