

Dr. Ross Lubrani, a chiropractor with a private practice, Xcell Chiropractic and Rehabilitation, in Elyria, OH.

THE CULPRIT

Causes of lumbar pain can range from a fall, to lifting something too heavy. However, Lubrani estimates that over half of all lower back injuries can be attributed to improper lifting. “Lumbar pain can come from improper lifting, or lifting something that is too heavy. It can also occur from twisting while lifting something heavy,” says Hoffman. “In addition, lumbar pain can occur from repetitive injury syndrome where someone is doing something, like sweeping or mopping, where they use the same set of muscles over and over.”

If you have a job that requires constant heavy lifting, proper techniques are imperative. **“Most people lift correctly, but the problems often arise when people are working overtime, and their legs or arms are tired,” says Lubrani. “That’s when you start using more muscles that aren’t meant to be used for lifting, which makes you more susceptible to injury in the lower back.”**

BACK TO NORMAL

To properly treat lumbar spine injuries, chiropractors must first conduct a complete spine evaluation. “A chiropractor has to determine if the femur is in the right position with the pelvis, if the pelvis is out of position, or if discs are degenerated in the lumbar spine. These are just a few of a whole host of different things that need to be evaluated,” says Ginter.

When it comes to adjustments, chiropractors will need to adjust the

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lumbar region of the spine, as well as other areas that may be affected by the injury. “If you come into the



chiropractic office, and we find you have an issue with the lumbar spine, most often it will be more than just a lumbar spine problem,” says Ginter. “Depending on what other problems a patient is having, we’ll have to adjust other areas of the body as well. So if there’s a neck issue, you need to adjust the neck. If there’s a problem with the femur or pelvis you’ll have to adjust those areas.”

GET MOVING

To help heal a lower back injury, exercise on a regular basis is recommended. “I like to have my patients do the ‘knee to chest’ exercises where the patient lies on the floor or bed, and tries to pull one knee up toward his or her chest,” says Hoffman. “Patients can do that on each side, as

well as by using both legs at the same time. People should do 10 to 15 of these on each side at least twice a day.”

Another helpful exercise is the “side bridge.” “This exercise is done by lying on your side. You prop yourself up with your arms, and raise the middle of your body off the ground to make a triangle,” says Ginter.

ONGOING VISITS

To keep the lumbar region of the spine in optimal health, chiropractors recommend ongoing chiropractic care. “Chiropractic is very important to make sure the body is functioning at its highest level for that specific individual,” says Lubrani. **“The quick fix chiropractic aspirin is not an approach that seems to work over the long-term. If you’re treating a pain symptom only, it’s almost a lost cause. In many cases, pain is the last to show, and first to go. The underlying problem always needs to be addressed, regardless if it’s showing its head through a symptom.”**

And the benefits of ongoing chiropractic care abound. “If you have adjustments even once a month or every six weeks, it helps the body adapt to everyday stresses and strains,” says Hoffman.

To prevent lumbar pain, chiropractors recommend the following:

1. Don’t try to lift weights that are too heavy.
2. If you carry a pocketbook or briefcase, don’t use a very large bag. “The smaller the purse, the better,” says Lubrani. “Also, alternate shoulders for your purse.”
3. Wear a back brace for lower back support if you have a job that requires heavy lifting, suggests Hoffman.
4. Practice proper lifting techniques.
5. Do proper exercises, such as “knee to chest” repetitions, to keep the lumbar region of the spine healthy.