

Upper Back Pain

Upper Back Pain Overview

Upper back pain, also called thoracic pain, refers to the stinginess felt between the neck and lower back. Some of the glaring causes of upper back pain include muscle weakness, incorrect body posture, twisting and turning, bending and extending, coughing or sneezing with force, carrying heavy weight over the shoulders, or sitting in the same pose for a long time.

Upper Back Pain Causes

The entire upper back area is stable and strong as compared to the lower back; therefore it is less likely to develop severe spinal disorders like herniated disc, spinal stenosis, degenerated disc or spinal disability. The most common cause of upper back pain includes muscular strains, soft tissues problem, low energy level, poor posture, injury, or a trauma.

Rhomboid muscle strain

Rhomboid muscles are present in the upper back and attach with vertebral spine and shoulder blades. These muscles facilitate the movement in the shoulders. Sometimes, muscle strain and spasm in that area causes upper back pain between the shoulder blades, causing discomfort among the patients.

Aging:

As a person ages, body tissues (Ligaments) become thicker, causing pressure on the spinal nerves and resulting in several spinal disorders. Aging process causes upper back pain by making the body numb and weak.

Daily Life Activities

The daily life practices are an obvious cause of a hurting upper back. If you've carried heavy weight on your back, worked on computer for hours, or engaged in any chore involving excessive physical work – you must know where the back ache came from.

Depression and upper back pain

Stress and anxiety are major contributors towards a painful upper back. When a person is stressed out or feeling gloomy, the muscles in upper back become stiff and rigid, causing discomfort in the back.

Injuries and fractures:

Injuries or fractures caused by trauma (car accident or sports injury etc) can also cause severe upper back pain. Similarly, people with osteoporosis are more sensitive to bone fractures and may face the same issue due to this disease.

Obesity

Over weight individuals usually feel soreness in their upper back section because so much body fat exerts pressure on not only the upper back, but also the lower back area.

Upper Back Pain Symptoms

Although feeling pain in the back is its own symptom. However, the following symptoms tell you to consult a pain physician immediately:

- Hurting in shoulder blades and the trapezius (the big triangular-shaped muscles of the upper back)
- You feel upper back pain that spreads out to the front of your chest, below your rib cage or abdomen.
- You don't know the reason why your upper back hurts
- Bowel problem.
- You have a family history of cardiovascular disease
- Arm or leg weakness or numbness
- You feel irritation during movement or with hard coughing and sneezing

Upper Back Pain Treatment

Almost 90% of Americans fall victim to back pain at least once in a lifetime, but it's extremely important to treat this condition properly and seek medical advice if it persists. Treatments for relieving upper back pain may differ for different patients. For some people a few weeks of home treatment may do the work, while others may have to undergo medications and therapies to get rid of the pain. Here are some of the pain treatments to cure upper back pain:

Procedures

Thoracic Epidural Steroid Injections

Intercostal Nerve Blocks

Paravertbral Nerve Blocks

Pulsed Radiofrequency Ablation of affected nerves

Trigger point injections, Myofascial Release

Peripheral Electrical Nerve Stimulation (PENS) treatment

Pain Medications

Pain medications may also be helpful in curing back pain. The most common ones are non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) helps in decreasing inflammation around the nerve roots area.

Exercise

Exercise can be extremely helpful in recovering a person from a hurtful back and strengthening of muscles. These exercises include aerobics, yoga, walking and other flexibility exercises.

Physical therapy

Physical therapy involves several exercise programs suggested by a professional who knows which areas to target and what limitations are involved. Never try doing it on your own. Do consult an experienced pain physician before taking any physical therapy

Acupuncture:

Finding its origin from China, acupuncture can be a good healer for upper back pain. This method helps by relaxing strained muscles, and proves effective for both acute and chronic pain. If you are looking for a treatment to cure your specific type of upper back pain, please feel free to consult the experts at Pacific Pain Care Consultants for all kinds of upper back pain solutions.

Upper Back Pain Prevention

A painful upper back is preventable with a little care and practice. People with back injury or people looking to avoid upper back pain can observe the following measures to control the condition:

- Avoid lifting heavy weight objects whenever you can
- Maintain correct posture while standing, sitting and sleeping
- Keep your muscles strong by exercising regularly
- Quit smoking
- Maintain a healthy weight by intake of nutritious diet