



Good Back Habits May Be Easier Than You Think

(NAPSA)—At least 80 percent of American adults experience low back pain at some time in their lives. If you have ever experienced back pain, you may be surprised to learn how easy it can be to prevent and manage.

People with no major back problems or dangerous medical conditions often don't realize that acute low back pain can be caused simply by sitting awkwardly, having poor posture, or lifting heavy objects improperly. Fortunately, this pain often can be managed, and even prevented.

To help back pain sufferers, Baylor College of Medicine has written, *Caring for Your Back: A Guide for Patients*.

This new brochure provides useful information on the back's structure and simple strategies for reducing the risk of injuries and muscle strain.

To maintain good posture the brochure suggests the following tips:

- When standing or walking, try to keep your chin in, your head up, your knees slightly bent, and your back straight.
- When sitting, keep your back straight, make sure that your chair supports your lower back.
- When driving, put a small pillow behind the small of your back, and on long trips try to take frequent breaks so you can stretch.

While these suggestions can help most people avoid unnecessary pain, *Caring for Your Back* also lists some ways to treat low back pain, when it does occur. These include applying a cold pack to the area for five to 10 minutes at 30-minute intervals, and use of over-the-counter medicines,



Back pain can be managed and even prevented by caring for your back.

such as Advil™ (ibuprofen) to manage pain. Ibuprofen is recommended by doctors for backaches more than any other non-prescription ingredient.

For those who have more than moderate low back pain, it is important to seek the advice of a healthcare professional who can recommend treatment and help patients make changes in their lifestyles that can restore low back strength and mobility.

Symptoms of more severe back problems are typically recognizable as pain that has lasted more than a few weeks, or pain accompanied by certain "danger signals," such as numbness, weakness in lower body, a high fever, rapid weight loss or problems controlling bowel and bladder functions.

To learn more about managing and preventing acute low back pain, you can order a copy of *Caring for Your Back* by writing to Advil Forum on Health Education, 1500 Broadway, 16th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10036. Please allow 8–10 weeks for delivery.