

20 questions to diagnose back problems

A number of things can cause back trouble. This simple questionnaire can help provide important clues to what's at the root of your back problem. Answer as many questions as you can and take a copy of this to your doctor when your back needs medical attention.



1. Do you have a history of back problems?
2. Where is the pain exactly?
3. When did the pain, stiffness, or symptoms begin?
4. Does the pain radiate or move in a particular direction? If yes, explain.
5. Did it begin gradually or suddenly?
6. Were you sick in any way when it began?
7. Do these symptoms disturb or prevent sleep (awaken you with pain)?
8. Is this the first experience of this kind?
9. Is the pain constant?

20 questions to diagnose back problems



10. Does the pain come and go?

11. Is the pain sharp, dull, burning, aching, cramping, or shooting?

12. What do you suspect the problem was caused by? Check all that apply.

- Injury
- Overweight
- Poor posture
- Stress/tension
- Menstruation
- Illness
- Pregnancy
- Overexertion
- Other



13. When does the problem annoy you the most? Check all that apply.

- At work
- When lifting
- When in bed
- When bending
- When stressed
- When fatigued
- When coughing or sneezing
- When sitting
- When standing
- When driving
- When carrying
- In the morning
- In the afternoon
- In the evening.
- Other

14. Do you experience muscle spasms?

15. Do you sleep on a soft mattress or a hard one?

16. Have you been under nervous or emotional strain lately?

17. Is there any redness, tenderness, or swelling?

18. Is there a daily pattern to the pain?

19. What helps relieve the pain? Check all that apply.

- Heat
- Ice packs
- Exercise
- Bed rest
- Hot baths
- Muscle relaxants
- Massage
- Brace
- Walking
- Painkillers
- Nothing
- Haven't tried anything

20. Are there any other factors that the doctor should be aware of?