



BACK PAIN— IMAGING TESTS & PRESCRIPTION MEDS

May not be required.

By following the steps below, most people who experience back pain feel better in about a month:

- Massage
- Non-opioid medication for pain relief
- Physiotherapy
- Low-impact exercise including water aerobics

Unless there are red flags, imaging such as x-ray, CT or MRI may complicate recovery.

Examples of red flags may include a history of cancer, unexplained weight loss, fever or recent infection. Sharing your health history with a health care provider will help determine the best treatment.

Remember that...

- *Prescription medication including opioids should be a last resort*
- Evidence shows that opioids, including codeine, are not more effective than other prescription pain medications for back pain
- Opioids become less effective over time as your body becomes used to them. This can lead to higher doses to get the same pain relief.

Talk to a health care provider...

About your back pain and general health to see if imaging tests are needed to diagnose your back pain and work together to find the right treatment for you.



LEARN MORE:

◀ choosingwiselycanada.org/pamphlet/treating-lower-back-pain

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