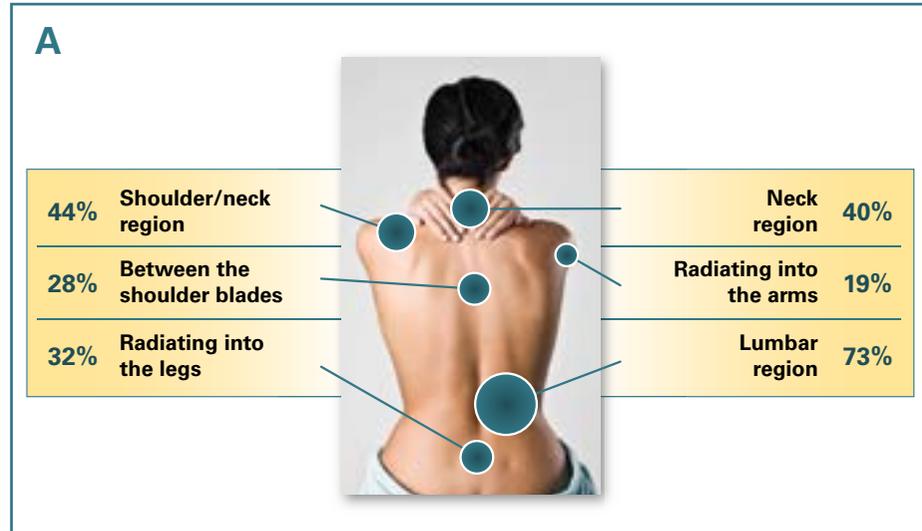
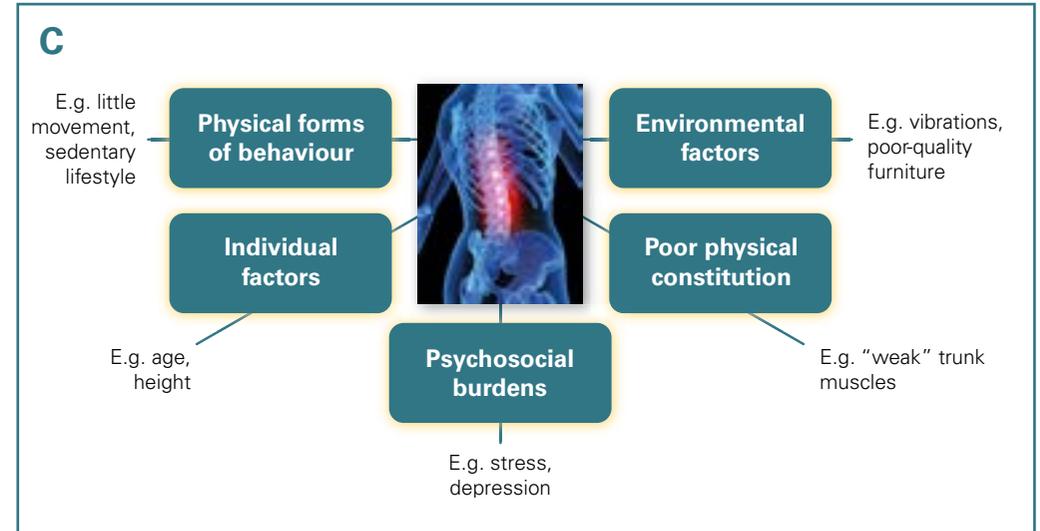


Back pain – overview

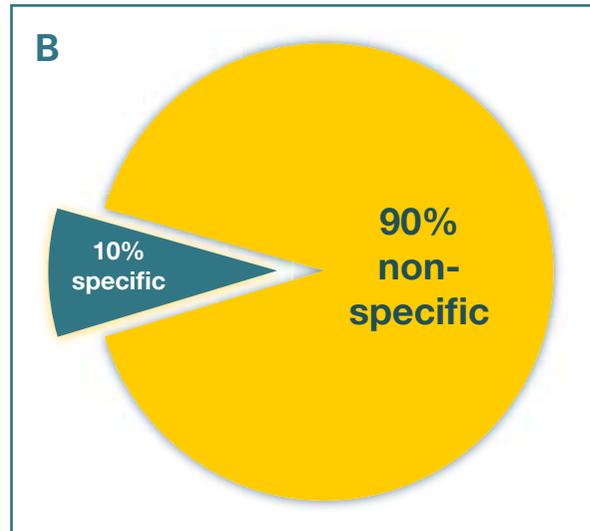
Where does back pain occur? [1, 2]



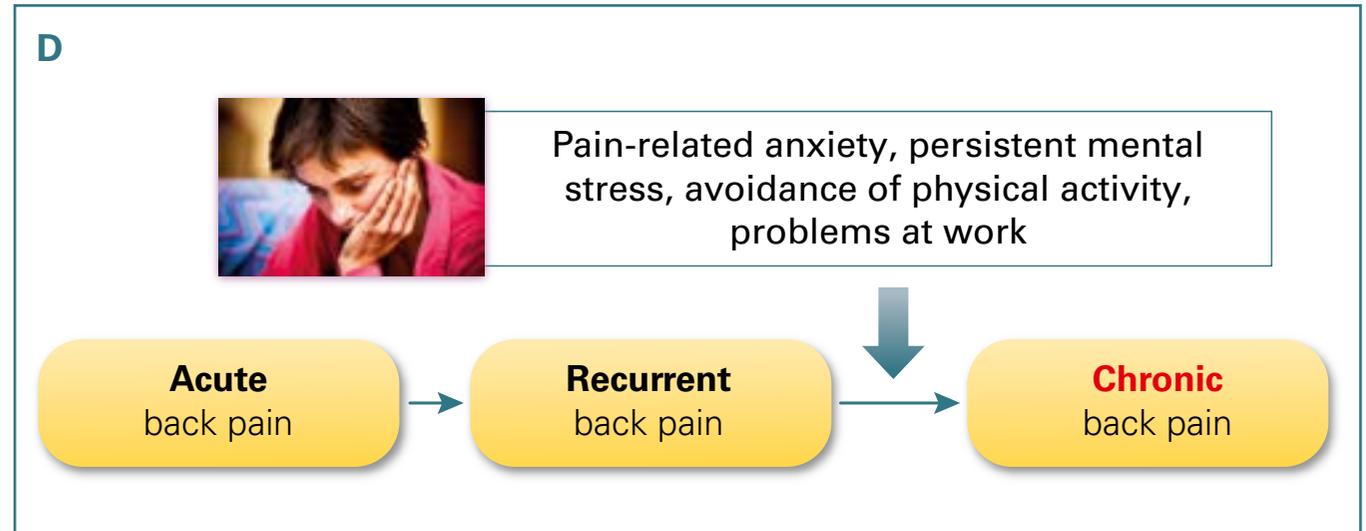
Risk factors for back pain [5, 6, 7]



Causes mostly unclear [3, 4]



Back pain over the course of time



Back pain – overview

A Where does back pain occur? [1, 2]

Most back pain affects the lumbar region.

B Causes mostly unclear [3, 4]

A clear cause is found in only around 10% of cases [3]. Examples include osteoporosis with fractures of vertebral bodies, prolapsed discs, rheumatoid arthritis, infections and tumours.

In 90% the mechanism cannot be clearly identified, and there are functional impairments due to incorrect loading and/or mechanical wear. Sitting posture, lack of muscle fitness and psychological factors play a significant role.

C Risk factors for back pain [5, 6, 7]

Numerous risk factors such as sedentary lifestyle, height, strong vibrations (e.g. pneumatic drills) or poor sitting posture can lead to long-term overloading or incorrect loading of the intervertebral discs.

Lack of exercise also leads to weak trunk muscles and to malnutrition of the intervertebral discs.

The functional capacity of the intervertebral discs also declines with age. Adequate movement can counteract wear.

A crucial factor in non-specific back pain is mental health (see also D – Back pain over the course of time) [5]. There is a psychophysical relationship between stress, strain and muscle tension.

D Back pain over the course of time

The term acute back pain is used if back pain occurs on a single occasion and heals within a few weeks. Recurrent back pain occurs repeatedly, mostly several times a year.

In chronic back pain, the pain occurs constantly and has developed into a disease in its own right. The development of chronic pain is strongly promoted by emotional problems [7]. This should be avoided.

[1] Chou R. et al. Ann Intern Med. (2007) 147: 478-91.

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[3] Krismer M, van Tulder M. Best Pract Res Clin Rheumatol (2007) 21: 77- 91.

[4] van Tulder M et al. Best Pract Res Clin Rheumatol (2002) 16: 761- 75.

[5] Heliovaara M. Ann Med (1989) 21(4): 257- 264.

[6] Frymoyer JW et al. J Bone Joint Surg Am (1983) 65(2): 213- 218.

[7] Linton SJ. Spine (2000) 25(9): 1148- 1156.