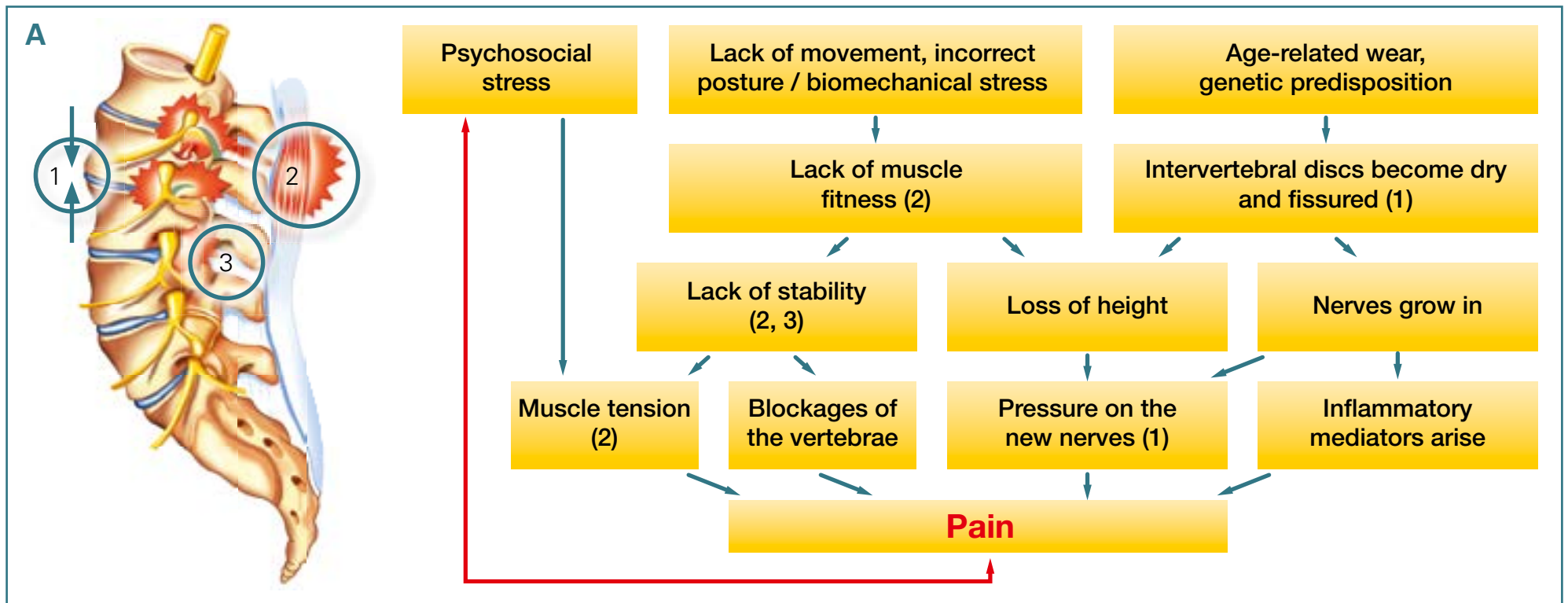
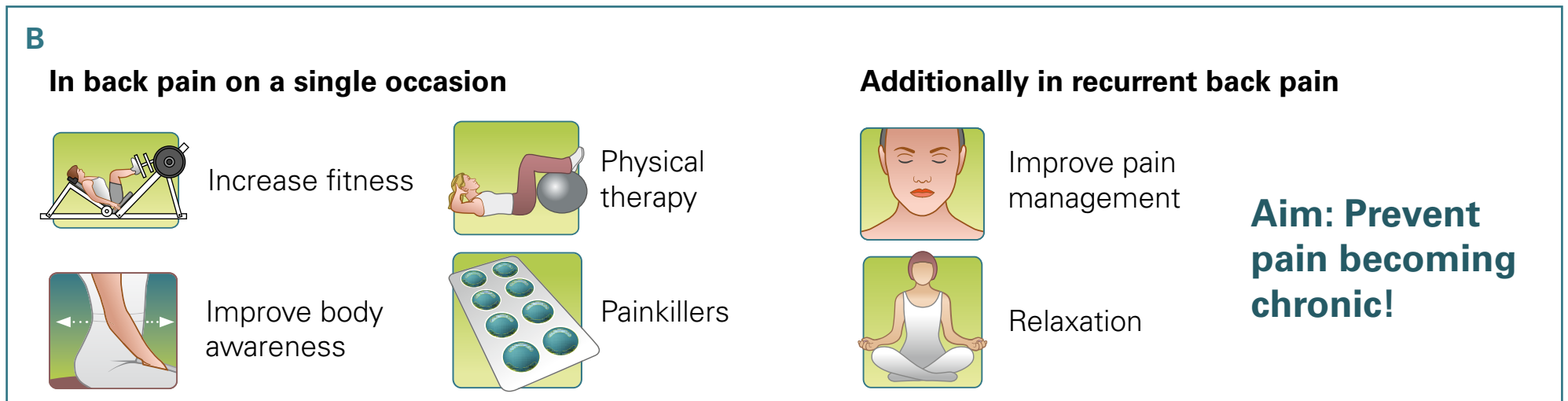


Lumbago – Non-specific low back pain

Development [1]



Treatment of acute and subacute forms [2, 3]



Lumbago – Non-specific low back pain

A Development [1]

Lack of exercise, incorrect biomechanical stress and incorrect posture can lead to the two most important causes of non-specific low-back pain: **lack of “muscle fitness” and degeneration of the intervertebral discs.**

Lack of muscle fitness leads to instability with muscle tension, which can be exacerbated by emotional problems and stress. Muscle tension and vertebral blockages lead to pain, which in turn can reinforce the emotional pressure. This vicious circle of emotional problems and pain is the principal reason for the pain becoming chronic.

Malnourished intervertebral discs degenerate more quickly than those that constantly alternate between loading and relaxation. However, intervertebral discs also wear independently of a lack of movement with age. In addition, people have differing susceptibilities to intervertebral disc degeneration.

Because of the intervertebral disc degeneration, the body starts repair processes, so that nerve endings subsequently grow into the intervertebral disc. The disc therefore becomes sensitive to pain itself. In addition, inflammatory mediators are produced in massive numbers. This pain has both nociceptive and neuropathic components (mixed pain, see also Section 6).

B Treatment [2, 3]

Prolonged bed rest is counterproductive, as it only serves to reinforce the imbalance between tense and relaxed muscles.

Treatment for the acute form consists of measures to increase fitness, physical therapy and training to improve body awareness. Painkillers may be prescribed, in order to make it easier to carry out the other measures.

The most important aim in recurrent back pain is to prevent the pain becoming chronic. Measures targeted at the emotional aspects are of greatest significance here: training to improve pain management and relaxation exercises (e.g. Jacobson’s progressive muscle relaxation).

[1] Balagué F, et al. Lancet (2012) 379(9814): 482- 491.

[2] van Tulder M. et al. Eur Spine J (2006) 15(Suppl 2): S169- S191.

[3] National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). NICE clinical guideline 88. Low back pain: early management of persistent non-specific low back pain. 2009. Available at: <http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/11887/44343/44343.pdf>. Accessed March 2013.