

TRUE CASES

For several years a 15 year old boy had experienced the embarrassment of frequent bed-wetting, as well as intermittent lower back pain. After three sessions, in which pressure was released in the lumbar spine, he had no further bladder problems. The bed-wetting recurred a year later after a heavy fall at rugby, but cleared up once more after two sessions of BSR.

A 48 year old man was experiencing such intense calf pain that he was unable to walk. He was not aware of any pain in his lower back. A week of traction in hospital had not eased the problem. After the first BSR session the lower back become very painful as feeling was restored to numbed nerves. The calf pain was unchanged. After the second session three days later the pain withdrew from the calves and was felt in the hips and lower back. After further releases 5 days later, the pain in the lower back began to lessen. The final session was 3 days after that. Within two weeks the client was pain-free and was able to return to work.

A 31 year old woman walked with one foot rotated outwards, since a motor accident in her teens. She frequently woke with her lower back in a painful spasm. She underwent regular BSR after a period of 3 months. Her foot was restored to its normal position and her buttock muscles, which had been wasted, had rebuilt.

ADVICE TO MINIMISE STRESS IN THE LOWER BACK

When bending down, bend your knees rather than bending at the waist.

When lifting, use the thigh muscles to take the strain. Hold the object close to the body and avoid twisting.

When sitting, ensure that the lumbar curve is maintained and that the knees are level with or lower than the hips. Do not sit with the feet up or recline for long periods in the bath.

Avoid exercises which reverse or strain the lumbar curve, e.g. toe-touching, sit-ups, double leg-raisers.

Take a few minutes to do the daily morning exercise which your BSR practitioner recommends, in order to strengthen the lower back and abdominal muscles.

Your mattress should be neither too hard nor too soft. It should support the normal hollow of the lower back.

THE LOWER BACK



Unlocking tension - Restoring self-healing

BODY STRESS RELEASE

Stress becomes locked into physical structures when the body fails to adapt to an overload of stress.

Body Stress Release is concerned with assisting the body to release stored tension, thereby allowing it to maximise its in-built ability to maintain and heal itself. The causes of tension may be mechanical, mental/ emotional or chemical factors.

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THE CAUSES OF BODY STRESS

The jarring effect of accidents and falls may cause body stress to become locked into the lower back. Also, heavy or incorrect lifting or bending may strain ligaments and muscles and result in stress becoming stored in the structures. The wrong kinds of exercise - those which involve twisting movements or repeated forward bending - may stress the lumbar spine. Another cause is poor posture, especially sitting in a slumped position which reverses the normal lumbar curve.

Sitting like this may give temporary relief from back pain, as it causes the joint spaces to open up at the back, and thus reduce pressure on spinal nerves for a short time. However, this posture builds up pressure on the discs and in time the back walls of the discs may weaken and develop a bulge. This would result in pressure being exerted on a spinal nerve.



THE STRUCTURE OF THE LOWER BACK

The spine of the lower back has five lumbar vertebrae and below these the sacrum, a triangular-shaped bone which fits between the bones of the pelvis with a sacro-iliac joint on each side. The coccyx is a small tail-like bone below the sacrum.

The 5
lumbar
vertebrae

Sacrum

Coccyx



Spinal
Nerves

Intervertebral
Discs



The bodies of the vertebrae are bound together by the intervertebral discs. These discs with their tough outer rim of cartilage and jelly-like core serve as shock-absorbers, and are shaped to give the lumbar spine its natural forward curve. The vertebrae form a bony canal containing the spinal cord. The spinal nerves exit from the cord through openings between the vertebrae, and supply the skin and muscles of the legs and feet, the lower abdomen and groin areas. Branches from these nerves also lead to the internal organs, such as the digestive, reproductive and urinary systems.

THE EFFECTS OF BODY STRESS

Irritation to the spinal nerves of the lower back may result in back pain and this may be referred along the nerve pathways into the abdomen, groin, hips, legs or feet. Often pain is felt along the same sciatic nerve which passes through the buttock and down the back of the leg.

There may also be sensations of numbness in any of these areas. Muscle function may be affected, resulting in stiffness or weakness. The compression effect in the lower back may be so severe that the back muscles lock up in a protective spasm, pulling the spine sideways or forwards.

While body stress remains stored in the lower back, the irritation to the nerves may undermine or disturb the normal functioning of the areas and organs they supply. Thus body stress may lead to digestive problems, e.g. constipation/ diarrhea, bladder complaints and may adversely affect sexual function.

Sometimes a person may not be aware of the body stress in the lower back other than feeling stiffness on arising in the morning. After BSR a person may be pain-free for a period, then experience a return of the problem for no apparent reason. This signals that the lower back is ready to undergo further deeper releases of body stress.

If the body stress has been present in the lower back for a long time (the cause may have originated in childhood), it may be necessary for the stored tension to be released in 'layers' over a period of time.

As the foundation of the spine the lower back area affects the stability of the rest of the spine. Therefore, if body stress is stored in the lumbar area, muscular tension will be referred to the upper back and neck.