

# Back Pain

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## SPECIAL REPORT

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Twelve steps on how  
to eliminate back pain,  
prevent its  
reoccurrences, and  
stop taking  
medications.



## About the Authors:

### Noelle Dowma DPT, BFA, PMA-CPT

**Educational Background:** Noelle graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Ballet Pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma and then received her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. She has been working in outpatient orthopedic settings since 2002. Since graduation, Noelle has pursued extensive continuing education through Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (has taken ALL of the offered courses), Kinetic control, Pilates based coursework, C1 and C2 BSPT Schroth certified, manual lymph drainage certified by Evergreen Certifications, Progressing Ballet Technique, and is Dry Needling Certified through Myopain seminars. Musculoskeletal injuries of the spine and all extremities are her main realm of experience. In addition, her areas of specialization include: osteopathic based manual therapy, Pilates based rehabilitation, dance medicine, craniosacral therapy, dry needling, manual lymph drainage, osteoporosis, hypermobility syndromes, and scoliosis. Noelle is the owner of Kinesphere Physical Therapy LLC.

**Pilates:** Noelle began studying Pilates when rehabilitating a dance injury in 1992. Since that time, she trained through the Physical Mind Institute, Polestar Pilates Education and is Nationally Pilates Certified. She is a Principal Educator for Polestar Pilates Education, where she teaches fitness and rehabilitation professionals how to use Pilates with their clients and patients. Having taught across the United States, Caribbean, and Mexico, Noelle is a regular presenter at courses and conferences. Pilates was a part of Noelle's life before becoming a Physical Therapist and it continues to be an essential part of her success with patients. Noelle developed the Pilates program at the Kansas City Ballet school. Noelle also teaches for Oov Education and is trained in the Konnector.

**Dance Medicine:** Noelle continues to dance today, but the professional training of her Bachelor of Fine Arts allows her the understanding of a dancer's career, body and injuries. The Miami City Ballet and Broadway shows were Noelle's past dance medicine experience before moving to Kansas City in 2006. Noelle teaches at local dance schools, including the Kansas City Ballet School and has been invited to teach at dance schools in the US and Mexico. As a sought after dance medicine physical therapist, Noelle works on touring Broadway shows coming through Kansas City and also served as the dance medicine specialist at Children's Mercy. She most recently presented in the 2017 International Association of Dance Medicine and Science conference. Additionally, she is certified in Progressing Ballet Technique (PBT).

### Ashley Herrman, DPT

**Educational Background:** Ashley graduated with an Associate of Science as a Physical Therapist Assistant, and practiced for a few years while earning her Bachelor of Health Science from Washburn University, and then received her Doctorate of Physical Therapy from the University of Kansas Medical Center. She has been practicing in outpatient orthopedics since 2003. Extensive continuing education has been pursued through North American Institute of Orthopedic Manual Therapy (NAIOMT), Kinetic Control, Polestar Pilates Education, Michigan State University's School of Osteopathic Medicine (craniosacral) and Schroth Barcelona Scoliosis Physical Therapy School (C1 and C2 certified). In her career she has provided individualized rehab for all types of musculoskeletal injuries of the spine and extremities, post-surgical rehab, sports medicine, and neurologic conditions. Thoroughly analyzing a patient's movement patterns and muscle imbalances are crucial to her practice, as is extensive patient education so to ensure long term success.

## Ashley Herrman, DPT Cont.

**Pilates:** Ashley did her rehabilitation specific Pilates training through Polestar Pilates Education in Kansas City, taught by Noelle. She completed her apprenticeship hours and successfully passed her graduation exam, allowing her to be an official Polestar Pilates Practitioner. Ashley also is trained in Oov and Konnect-or.

**Sports Medicine:** Ashley particularly enjoys working with athletes, as they prepare to return to sport after injury. As an athlete herself, Ashley understands the demands of sports and rehabilitates them using her extensive continuing education. This even extends to dance medicine, as she applies biomechanical principles to allow for restoration of dance technique.

**Dance Medicine:** Although Ashley is not a dancer, she is experienced with treating the needs of the dancer and has excellent success in her outcomes. She has taught performers from Broadway shows as well as local dance studios.

## Leslie Ricketts, MPT, COMT, MCT

**Educational Background:** Leslie graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Exercise Physiology from Drury University, prior to earning her Master of Physical Therapy from Rockhurst University. She has been working in outpatient orthopaedic settings since 2002, where she has had the opportunity to work with all types of orthopaedic issues, and has specifically enjoyed working with patients with neck and back pain. This led her to advance her training and receive a certification in manual therapy through the International Academy of Orthopedic Medicine (IAOM). She has done extensive training through the IAOM related to treating the shoulder, elbow, hip, and knee as well. Additional training occurred through the Institute of Physical Art (IPA) and this has been helpful in improving patient muscle activation and function. Leslie's treatment focus is on identifying the source of the dysfunction, improving the joint mobility or stability, correcting the muscle imbalances, and returning the patient to her/his best mechanics and function. She believes in strong communication with her patients so to address their dysfunctions and collaborate to meet their goals.

**Pilates:** Leslie is a Polestar Pilates Education graduate, having studied the comprehensive rehabilitation series and enjoys how much benefit Pilates brings her patients.

**Sports Medicine:** Leslie enjoys using her own personal experience as an athlete, in addition to her training, to aid in her care of athletes of all ages. Her MOVNAT certification has enabled her to provide natural movement education and instruction to beginner through advanced mover. She has worked with athletes from many different backgrounds and strives to provide individualized sport-specific therapy to each patient. One of her favorite sports is soccer where she continues to stay active by coaching a youth team.



## Megan McCoy, DPT, NCPT

**Educational Background:** Megan graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of San Diego and then received her Doctorate of Physical Therapy from Emory University. Through her education and career, Megan has gained extensive experience working with orthopedic injuries of varying levels. She has special interests in injury prevention, athletes, chronic pain, and neurological impairments. Megan approaches each patient with dedication, seeing her patients through their illness or injury and working toward achieving their highest level of function. Empowering her patients to take responsibility for their own wellness and learn to maximize their potential, with her guidance, is how Megan approaches her role as a physical therapist.

**Pilates:** Megan trained through The Pilates Center based out of Boulder, CO, whose owners, Amy Alpers and Rachel Segel, studied with Pilates Elder Romana Kryzanowsky, a long-time student of Joseph Pilates. Her advanced teacher training was completed at The Pilates Center and is Nationally Certified in Pilates. She has assisted on teaching lectures to Duke University PT students on Pilates Physical Therapy and worked in a private practice using Pilates equipment in North Carolina. The vastly beneficial nature of Pilates, regardless of illness or impairment, is one of Megan's favorite aspects of her physical therapy practice.

**Sports Medicine:** Megan enjoys working with athletes, from a prehab role to a return to sport role. As an athlete herself, she knows the major role physical therapists play in both preventing injury and rehab to return to sport. She has worked with a wide variety of sports and hones in on the specific movement patterns and muscle activation needed for each individual athlete.



# Back Pain

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## IN THIS SPECIAL REPORT....

.....on actually ending your back pain, we will share with you some principles and techniques that you can make work for you. Please note that some of our techniques may take some time for you to see any results, while others may give you some instant relief.

While there is no guarantee that any one of the principals or techniques will work for you, and since we do not know your back pain history, it will be hard to say what will and what will not work for you. But what we can say is that over the years we, as Physical Therapists, have been able to narrow down what generally does and doesn't work.

What we hope is that in reading this report you are able to find the true cause of your back pain. There is a way to get to the bottom of your discomfort. What is most exciting about this is that it is completely FREE! You don't need to get a referral from your doctor or even call your insurance company to see if it is a covered benefit. There are no hoops to crawl through.

What can you do right now? Take some time out of your day today, and everyday, to see if any one of these principals or techniques work for you. What is more, they are all natural and require NO medication! We think that you will be surprised by how much better you will feel.

We truly feel that if you apply all of the principles/techniques in this report, that you should soon see your back pain decrease.

Sincerely,

*Kinesphere Physical Therapy LLC*

# Twelve Strategies To Help Get To The Root Cause Of Your Low Back Pain:

## 1) Rest Is Not Always Best:

It used to be that when people had back pain, they were told to rest by lying in bed for a week. We now know this is not the best option—movement means healing. That being said, pain should be your guide...if you have increased pain walking or doing your daily activities or sports, you likely are causing more harm than good. If you can find movements and activities that are less painful, or even alleviating of your pain, you should participate in those activities.

## 2) Don't Wear High Heels:

High heels put your feet, knees and pelvis in a unique tilted position. This carries upwards into your low back and even middle back and neck. Additionally, you walk differently wearing the heels, so this causes compensation which can lead to irritation of muscles, discs and nerves. Selecting supportive, comfortable shoes or bare feet would be a better option.

## 3) Sleep With A pillow Between Your Knees:

If you are a side sleeper, the top knee ends up going “downhill” which causes strain in your low back. This can be helped by putting a pillow between your knees so that the top knee is higher and therefore better aligned for your low back.

## 4) Check Your Posture:

Do you sit slumped? Gravity can be a foe when you let your spine curve forward. By sitting with support behind your back (a pillow or chair back), you can often allow the angry muscles in your back to relax. The more supportive the chair (that keeps you upright), the better. Having good posture does not always take work... positioning with a pillow or furniture selection can give you the rest you need to calm your symptoms.

## 5) Lie In The Constructive Rest Position:

Lying on your back, with your legs elevated (knees and hips bent to ~90degrees) for 10-15 minutes at a time may help to calm back pain that manifests as leg pain. This position is where your discs have the least pressure, which allows any nerve involvement to “get a break” so to allow healing.

## 6) Avoid Asymmetry In Your Life:

Sitting with your legs crossed puts undue strain on your pelvis, sacrum and spine. You may very well not only put these asymmetrical forces on your spine, but also may more often cross one leg, further causing imbalances. Another example is purse/briefcase/back pack carrying. This often happens over one shoulder and again will cause compensations in your posture that strain your back and cause pain.

## 7) Avoid Sleeping On Your Stomach:

When lying on your stomach, gravity pulls your back into an arch, which with being there for a prolonged period of time, like sleeping, you will wind up feeling stiff and in pain. Additionally, your neck has to turn to the side which is another source of strain on your spine. Why not try sleeping on your side with a pillow between your knees.

## 8) Do Core Exercises:

Core exercises work on the stability of your trunk, which means your back is more free to handle the forces of life that comes its way. Doing core exercises correctly is not always easy, as the fitness world calls nearly all trunk exercises 'core' exercises. Going to a class or seeing a professional in rehabilitation or fitness would best ensure you are doing these correctly.

## 9) Stop Sitting For So Long:

There is a new phrase buzzing around: "Sitting is the new smoking". Research is starting to show that you CANNOT undue prolonged sitting. We were not made to have our butts glued to a chair for eight hours a day. You can help this by getting up every 20 minutes. It could be to walk to the kitchen, going over to talk to a co-worker, or doing a few exercises.

## 10) Change Your Mattress:

Over time, mattress structures break down. If there is a 'gulley' in your mattress, you are probably allowing your body to fall into this space which is causing torsion and strain on your spine. Consider flipping your mattress or try a new one and see how your back feels.

## 11) Think Of Your Body Mechanics:

Are you bending your knees when you pick up an object from the floor? To stop straining your back ligaments, discs, and muscles, you should be bending over with a flat back which often requires the old adage: "Use your legs!" By lifting in this better position, you will prevent the unnecessary strain on your back.

Note: It is important you heed the tips in this free report, but should consider working hands on with a physical therapist and work together to get to the root cause of your back pain.

## 12) Find Out What Is Wrong By Going To A Physical Therapist!

The most-likely reason people don't try this first, is they don't know how easy it is!

You do NOT need a referral from a doctor. With Kansas being a Direct Access state, patients are able to see a physical therapist without a referral from a physician if that patient progresses toward a positive outcome within 10 visits or 15 business days, whichever comes first. If progress is not made within that time frame, a referral will then be required in order to continue PT. After the initial evaluation, we will send a physical therapy plan of care to your physician of choice to be reviewed and signed for approval, and we will continue to work together to provide you the very best care.

Call TODAY to schedule an evaluation with a licensed physical therapist. Here at Kinesphere Physical Therapy, we will verify your insurance coverage and provide you with benefit and cost-share information as a courtesy to you. If you do not have insurance or if we are unable to bill your insurance directly due to being out of network, we offer flat rate self-pay pricing at a discount to what we procedurally bill through insurance. If you have out of network benefits, we can provide you with itemized receipts along with helpful tips for you to submit claims to your insurance for possible reimbursement.

By getting a thorough evaluation and having your questions answered, you can find the cause of your pain and be on your way to pain-free living. You will be advised on what they think is going wrong with your back and will help you find the right professional/s who can help you with it. What a simple way to ease into this process of solving your back pain!

Why not see if a physical therapist can help you with your back pain? You don't have to do anything but schedule an appointment.





# Conclusion:

Well, here you go, twelve tips to help calm your low back pain and to help lead you to the ROOT CAUSE. These are very practical tips that you can do TODAY to help get your health back and reduce your worry.

These suggestions are just the tip of the iceberg of what we as physical therapists can do to help you with your low back pain. When followed, these tips can significantly help you to calm your low back pain. Though effective, to know if these tips are truly getting to your ROOT CAUSE of back pain, it is best to be evaluated by a physical therapist.

By following the tips in this report, you are taking charge of your back pain and empower yourself to not rely on pills, expensive chiropractic visits, and reliance on modifying your activities due to pain. You don't need a doctor's referral for any of this. This is your way back to health and life enjoyment while assessing the benefits of physical therapy and how it can make a HUGE difference in your life.

We hope that this is the beginning of a great relationship that guides you back to all the things you love, without pain. Our team at Kinesphere Physical Therapy strives to be an essential part of helping you (and your family) get back to the life you deserve.

Dedicated to helping others,

*Noelle, Ashley, Leslie, and Megan*

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## Health Advice Disclaimer:

We make every effort to provide up to date, accurate advice on injury and prognosis in this report.

The examples of injuries and prognosis are based on our clinical experience. This means your particular situation may be different and therefore the information given may not be specific to your exact injury. With all medical issues, the recovery process varies significantly based on symptoms, length of time with symptoms, tissues involved, lifestyle factors, genetics, previously existing conditions, exercise execution, postural choices and motivations. Correctly following this information is beyond our control.

As Physical Therapists, we know we are unable to be fully accurate without a thorough history of symptoms and a physical examination. The inability to be able to participate in this, means any advise given for back pain management cannot be fully accurate. With that said, we highly encourage you to schedule an evaluation with a licensed physical therapist to ensure you are given the appropriate measures to treat your pain.

We are also trained to refer to other professionals when we see an injury beyond our scope. There are NO guarantees of specific results in this report, nor are they implied by Kinesphere Physical Therapy LLC.

