

Care of an Acute Back Injury

1. Rest in bed as much as possible. Get up only for meals or to use the bathroom.
2. Suggested positions for bed rest:
 - a) Lie on a firm surface.
 - b) Lie on your side with your knees up.
 - c) Lie on your back with a pillow under your knees.
3. Apply a hot water bottle or heating pad for 15 minutes every hour. Do not sleep on a heating pad or hot water bottle.
4. Take a shower with water directed on the sore area to ease discomfort.
5. Do not lift or bend until your doctor instructs you to do so.
6. Notify your doctor or return to the hospital if:
 - a) The pain worsens, in spite of rest and medication.
 - b) You have difficulty controlling urination.
 - c) You develop persistent numbness of your legs or hip area.
 - d) You have further questions regarding your medication and treatment.
7. Be patient. Your back injury will require rest and time to get better.

* Your doctor may prescribe different forms of pain medication for you. Follow instructions for taking these medications carefully. If you have any questions or concerns about your medication, ask your doctor or pharmacist.