

Chronic Back Pain costs more than time for Australian Workers

APM Health
& Wellbeing
Market Update



Reducing the risk of lower back pain becoming chronic

Physical safety



Assess manual tasks and address identified risks



Support access to information about healthy lifestyles



Invest in good workstation setup

Psychosocial Factors



Effectively manage and monitor workloads



Actively encourage and foster good workplace social networks



Promote a feeling of 'control' by collaborating on job design

Back pain is the most common condition keeping older Australians (aged 45 – 64) out of the workforce, cutting a whopping \$3.2 billion out of GDP annually according to Monash University.

Studies show many current treatment options including scans, opioids, injections and surgery are 'useless, unnecessary and harmful'. Moderate and regular activity, along with safe work are well-recognised as essential ingredients in the effective management of lower back pain.

A new study has further highlighted the importance of psychological and social ('psychosocial') work factors in the development of chronic low back pain.

Workplaces which offer good psychosocial support are more likely to have individuals with lower back pain recover, or are able to manage their pain without it becoming a chronic condition. Essentially keeping people in long-term work.

Most people, at some point in their life, will experience back pain.

Workplaces can put in place a range of strategies to ensure this normal part of ageing doesn't deplete their bottom line. These strategies need to simultaneously consider physical safety, injury prevention, and psychosocial factors.

Your organisation will save money and time, more importantly you will be helping your team members avoid the debilitating effects of chronic lower back pain.

More help and information:

- Konekt offer free [online workstation checklists and videos](#)
- Safe Work Australia resources for [physical](#) and [psychosocial](#) risk management
- The [APM Health team](#) can give advice tailored to your workplace

Workplaces currently face a myriad of challenges and opportunities. Through our Health & Wellbeing Market Updates we aim to provide regular insights to help you address some of the issues arising and better support your teams.

Visit apm.net.au/health to view all Market Updates

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