

## Mayo Clinic Minute: How can you avoid back surgery?

Back pain is one of the most common reasons people seek medical help or miss work. It is a leading cause of disability worldwide. Back pain can range from a muscle aching to a shooting, burning or stabbing sensation. Fortunately, there are measures that can help prevent or relieve most back pain episodes. If prevention fails, simple home treatment and using the body correctly often will heal the back within a few weeks.

MAZIYAR KALANI, M.D. NEUROSURGERY Mayo Clinic	"A majority of folks get it. They're too sedentary. They don't have a strong core. They have a lot of weight that their body has to carry. So when you put all those together, it just becomes a little too much for the back to tolerate."
Narrator:	Dr. Maziyar Kalani, a Mayo Clinic neurosurgeon, says there are measures to help assist with most back pain. Medications, physical therapy and exercise can help.
MAZIYAR KALANI, M.D.	"Our main goal is to try to get you treated nonoperatively. A majority of people will get improvement with just nonoperative, or what we call conservative therapy.
Narrator:	While surgery is rarely needed to treat back pain, there are cases where it is necessary.
MAZIYAR KALANI, M.D.	"We tend to see a lot more of things like pinched spinal cords, pinched nerves, instability of the spine. These are things that surgery is quite effective for, of course, after you've really gone on through the nonoperative care. When you have surgery on your body, it does change your body. So we want to make sure that you get a really high return on the invasiveness of the surgery. And we try to keep it, of course, as least invasive as possible."

Narrator:

For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm  
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