



# Managing flare-ups in low back pain

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Your patient has recently completed a functional restoration programme to help with management of their persistent low back pain. They have been taught how to use exercise to help maintain back function. They have learnt about the biology of chronic pain and strategies they can use to help manage their pain.

An important part of managing low back pain concerns how to manage inevitable flare-ups of their usual pain. They have been encouraged to use a self management approach to address this, however should they consult with you regarding their back pain, they should apply the following principles

## **FLARE-UP MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES**

- Keep calm, it will get better
- Assess whether this is a new pain or your familiar one
- Use relaxation principles (eg breathing exercises) and do some gentle exercises
- Take it slower for a few hours
- Keep active, but be prepared to modify activities
- Begin to build physical activities up gradually
- Take your usual analgesic medication if it helps
- Aim to keep in control of your recovery
- Reflect on what might have triggered the flare-up in order to learn from it
- Congratulate yourself afterwards for managing it well

The patient should now be well equipped to manage any on-going problems. Should you require any further information, contact the Functional Restoration Service on 0121 685 4126