



A Practical Guide to the Self-Management of Lower Back Pain: A Holistic Approach to Health and Fitness

James Tang

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Decades of bending over patients, coupled with a back injury, left dentist James Tang with chronic back pain and no viable, consistent solutions. "I was so fed up I subsequently decided...to manage my own back problems," he writes. He shifted from dentistry to a career as a personal trainer, sports massage therapist and National Academy of Sport Medicine corrective exercise specialist and now shares his holistic approach to understanding and self-managing lower back pain. The guide also aims to help readers develop overall fitness and lose weight—and includes a section on fibromyalgia trigger points.

A sedentary lifestyle, poor posture, obesity, emotional stress or a sports injury are some of the most common underlying reasons that core back muscles become destabilized, the author notes. To demonstrate how to manage the resultant pain and instability, he provides an overview of back pain and best practices for its remediation, exploring theories behind pain management strategies, such as trigger points and resistance, interval and flexibility training—along with the benefits of exercises that incorporate these strategies.

Well-illustrated with photos of the author performing exercises from the plank to hip flexor stretches, the book also offers useful tips such as when to eat before exercising, cervical pillow purchases and how to most effectively benefit from interval training.

A Practical Guide is written with a fair amount of medical terminology. Those looking for quick fixes to alleviate back pain may find such terminology daunting, particularly the author's clinical explanations of musculoskeletal anatomy and physiology (as in: "The four quadriceps muscles are the vastus lateralis, vastus medialis, vastus intermedius, and rectus femoris. All the quadriceps muscles attach to the patella (kneecap).")

As such, the book will appeal most to those seeking a more theoretical understanding of the underlying clinical causes of lower back pain and the techniques designed to relieve it. Exercise and sports medicine professionals may also appreciate this work.

Also available in hardcover.