

When Back Pain Strikes at Night

Interventional Pain Management Specialist Dr. Kaliq Chang with Atlantic Spine Center explains causes and treatments for nighttime backache

WEST ORANGE, NJ, UNITED STATES, August 31, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Back pain](#) is never a welcome thing, but somehow it feels even worse when it strikes just as you're easing into sleep or slumbering in the wee hours. But figuring out why you're experiencing nighttime back pain and taking steps to stem it may be the only way back to peaceful Zzz's, says Kaliq Chang, MD, of [Atlantic Spine Center](#).

If you're experiencing back pain at night, you should know you're far from alone. Not only is lower back pain at any time of day or night extremely common – affecting up to 8 in 10 American adults at some point – but up to 80% of people with chronic pain also have trouble sleeping because of it, research has revealed.

"Pain is definitely one of the biggest contributors to having trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up earlier than you'd like," explains Dr. Chang, an interventional pain management specialist. "Instead of taking sleep aids, however – which may seem easiest – it's crucial to target the reasons for your nighttime back pain."

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Dr. Kaliq Chang

Causes of nighttime back pain

Unless your back pain is caused by a worn-out mattress or pillow, you probably aren't experiencing it only at night. "Many people have some nagging back pain during the day, but it just seems worse at night because they're distracted by work and other activities during daylight hours," Dr. Chang explains.

Other than saggy bedding, common medical conditions leading to nighttime back pain include:



Dr. Kaliq Chang

- Pregnancy
- Spinal disc degeneration
- Injuries such as sprains or bone breaks
- Arthritis
- Scoliosis, which is a gradually progressing spine curvature
- Spinal stenosis, a narrowing of the spinal column
- Kidney stones

"Lying down for sleep can pinch or press on nerves around the spine that are compromised by spinal or other health conditions," Dr. Chang explains. "Our inflammation levels also rise at night as circulation slows, so this too can contribute to our sense of pain."

Tips for relief

Any lingering back pain should be checked out by your doctor to rule out any serious contributing conditions, Dr. Chang says. After that, try these ways of stemming back pain at bedtime:

- Stretch: Muscle tightness is a massive contributor to back pain. Before climbing under the sheets, take a few moments to gently stretch your back, legs and neck to work out any knots that might wake you up later.
- Take a bath: Similarly, relax your muscles by soaking in a warm bath. Alternately, some massaging shower heads can target problem areas with bursts of warm water, Dr. Chang notes.
- Adjust your sleep position: We often have a favorite position in which to slumber, but you may need to change things up in order to prevent back pain. Stomach sleeping can be most problematic since it throws the spine out of alignment.
- Put a wedge in it: You can soften the stress on your spine while sleeping by placing a pillow or wedge in strategic spots. If you're a side sleeper, put a pillow between your legs; stomach sleepers can place one under your pelvis. Back sleepers can use a pillow beneath their knees.
- Buy new bedding: If your mattress is more than a decade old, it may be time for a new one. Saggy pillows that don't keep your neck in alignment with the rest of your body are also prime candidates for replacement. "Many people don't fully appreciate how important quality, up-to-date bedding can be in keeping them comfortable throughout the night," Dr. Chang says. "Try out the 'feel' of new products in the showroom or store first before you bring them home."

Atlantic Spine Center is a nationally recognized leader for endoscopic spine surgery and pain management with several locations in NJ and NYC. www.atlanticspinecenter.com

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