

MY PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

REMEMBER YOUR WHY

I want to take control of my pain so that I can keep up with my son, enjoy adventures with my family, and be there for my loved ones and my patients.

SEEK CARE WHEN NEEDED

I will:

- *make an appointment with my primary care provider if I don't already have a diagnosis*
- *go to the emergency department if I have back pain and can't walk, can't pee, can't feel the saddle area between my legs, can't control my bowels, or have weakness in my legs*
- *get cognitive behavioural therapy if I experience any yellow flags (unhelpful beliefs, low mood, fear avoidance, or preference for passive treatments)*
- *see my primary care provider again if a flare isn't getting better despite my efforts in six weeks, or sooner if it's getting worse*

TAKE ACTION DURING A FLARELearn about back pain

I will read the latest guidelines about nonspecific low back pain when they come out so that I can keep up to date.

Stay active

| Category | Difficulty | Solution |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Activities of Daily Living | <i>Picking my son up off the floor</i> | |
| Challenging Activities | <i>Squatting my normal weight in my workout</i> | <i>Use half my normal weight for 2 weeks</i> |
| Sleep | <i>Not applicable (thankfully)</i> | <i>Prioritize sleep when I have a flare</i> |
| Socializing | <i>Much more pain when I sit on the ground at my son's playgroup</i> | <i>Sit on the ground for a bit, then use a chair when it's too much</i> |
| Work | <i>Sitting for more than an hour</i> | <i>Stand up to chart in between patients</i> |

Question unhelpful beliefs

My flares get better over a few days and are gone within a few weeks.

Any movement is safe, even if it's painful.

Just because I'm feeling unable to do something now doesn't mean I won't be able to do it tomorrow; I can't predict the future.

It's OK to ask for help when I need it.

Medications

| Medication | Dosage | Frequency per day | Duration |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Naproxen</i> | <i>220 mg</i> | <i>Once a day</i> | <i>Maximum of 3 days</i> |

Other therapies

When the pain is getting distracting at home, I'll use my microwaveable heat pack on my back for 15 minutes.

When I'm getting frustrated with the pain, I'll take a 20-minute nap.

AIM TO PREVENT INJURY

My regular healthy habits: *It's taken me years to build these healthy habits – work on one at a time

Recreational substances: enjoy one or two beers a week

Physical activity: aim for 10,000 steps daily

Sleep: 8 hours, consistent bedtime and wake-up time

Socializing: see people outside my home once a week

Work/Meaning: write any amount every week

My trigger management

| Trigger | Duration/Repetitions | Strategy |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Sitting at my desk</i> | <i>1 hour</i> | <i>Stand up every 30 minutes, walk around a bit if able</i> |
| <i>Squatting heavy weight</i> | <i>10 repetitions</i> | <i>Make sure to do a proper warm up with lighter weights first</i> |

NOTE TO SELF: YOU CAN DO HARD THINGS!