

# MY QUICK ACTION STEPS SUMMARY

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## CHAPTER 1 - REMEMBER YOUR WHY

The first action step is to write down your Why. Why are you reading this book? What are you hoping to gain from it? Why is taking control of your back pain important to you? Try to be specific.

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## CHAPTER 2 - LEARN ABOUT BACK PAIN

For this action step, I encourage you to make an appointment with your family physician or nurse practitioner to get a diagnosis if you haven't already.

## CHAPTER 3 - SCRATCH THE SURFACE OF PAIN SCIENCE

Write down what you can do during a flare if you need to learn more about the condition.

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## CHAPTER 4 - GET BACK TO EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

Write down any activities that you have difficulty with in each of the categories below. Write down a solution to that difficulty beside it. Feel free to add your own categories or to use the "Other" category.

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Category	Difficulty	Solution
Activities of Daily Living		
Challenging Activities		
Sleep		
Socializing		
Work		
Other		

## **CHAPTER 5 - QUESTION NEGATIVE BELIEFS**

Write down any unhelpful beliefs you have about back pain. Pick one or two that you think may be holding you back. Next, ask if these beliefs are based on fact or fiction. To check, it would be prudent to ask a healthcare professional who knows the latest research on back pain. You could also check reputable websites. Then, write down what would be possible if the beliefs weren't true. Finally, if this resonates with you, write some positive things you want to remember when you have back pain.

1. Unhelpful belief:
2. Is it true?
3. What would be possible if it wasn't true?
4. What to remember when I have pain:

**CHAPTER 6 - DON'T RELY ON MEDICATIONS**

List the medications you take for back pain. Include the type of medication, how much, and how often you take it. Write down how many days in a row you take them too. Then, it's essential to talk to your primary care provider about whether you need them, if they're safe, and how you may be able to cut back on them if they're not effective.

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

**CHAPTER 7 - SPEND LESS ON LOW-VALUE THERAPIES**

Write down what add-on therapies you use for your back pain. Next to each one, give it a rating from 1 to 5 (doctors love an arbitrary scale). Five means it's super helpful, while one means it doesn't help at all. If you find any therapies score a 1, 2, or 3, it might be time to think about letting them go – they could be taking up your time, energy, and money without really making a difference. Even if you have therapies rated 4 or 5, consider how much of your resources they're using. Remember, these add-on therapies can be great, but they're not essential for managing your back pain.

Add-On Therapy	Rating	Keep or Stop
e.g., Heat Pack	1 2 3 4 5	<i>Keep! It feels nice and it's helpful for me.</i>
	1 2 3 4 5	
	1 2 3 4 5	

## CHAPTER 8 – SEEK HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

1. See your primary care provider to assess your back pain if you haven't already.
2. Go to the emergency department if you have back pain and can't walk, can't urinate, can't feel the area between your legs, can't control your bowels, or have weakness in both legs.
3. See a provider who does cognitive behavioural therapy if you have any yellow flags (unhelpful beliefs, low mood, fear avoidance, or preference for passive treatments).
4. See your primary care provider again if a flare isn't getting better in six weeks, or sooner if it's getting much worse.

**CHAPTER 9 - BOOST YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

Write out the physical activity you do in a week. For each activity you do, write down how long the activity lasts and how many times a week you do it. Details like this let you know your starting point and help with measuring your progress. Next, write down how you're going to build on your current activity level. Last, write down your plan to track your activity.

Activity	Minutes per Session	Sessions per Week	Progression Plan
<b>How to Track Progress:</b>			

**CHAPTER 10 – LOWER YOUR RISK OF INJURY**

Write down one regular habit you'd like to do for your health. This could be a habit in any of the following categories: recreational substances, physical activity, body weight, sleep, socializing, or work/meaning. Once you feel comfortable sticking with this habit, feel free to add another.

Healthy habit to work on:

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Last, write down your trigger(s) for back pain. Be specific: how long do you have to do it for? How many repetitions? Then, write down a strategy that would help you do that activity.

Trigger	Duration/Repetitions	Strategy