

MSK pain associated with working from home

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Why?

- Lots more staff are working from home and are likely to continue to do so for some time, working might look lots different in the future
- Locally and nationally we've seen a marked increase in staff referring for pain associated with working from home
- This is potentially a massive problem being saved up for the future

Outline

1. What ? A critical review of the evidence
 - a. How to prevent MSK pain in office/desk workers- a historic view
 - b. What are the predictors of pain?
 - c. How to prevent MSK pain- best current evidence
2. So what? How do we apply this to working from home
3. Now what?

1a. How to prevent MSK pain in desk/office workers- a historic view

- The common response to pain for desk workers is . . .
- This is taken from HSE guidelines.
- But where did this come from? What's the evidence for this?
- Based on:
biomechanical studies

1a. How to prevent MSK pain in desk/office workers- a historic view

See Brinjikji *et al*, 2015

1a. How to prevent MSK pain in desk/office workers- a historic view

See:

Van Niekerk

Bakker

Kwon

Driessen

1b. What are the predictors of MSK pain?

See NICE guidelines for Low Back Pain

The Keele STarT Back Screening Tool

Patient name: _____ Date: _____

Thinking about the **last 2 weeks** tick your response to the following questions:

	Disagree 0	Agree 1
1. My back pain has spread down my leg(s) at some time in the last 2 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I have had pain in the shoulder or neck at some time in the last 2 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I have only walked short distances because of my back pain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. In the last 2 weeks, I have dressed more slowly than usual because of back pain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. It's not really safe for a person with a condition like mine to be physically active	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Worrying thoughts have been going through my mind a lot of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I feel that my back pain is terrible and it's never going to get any better	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. In general I have not enjoyed all the things I used to enjoy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

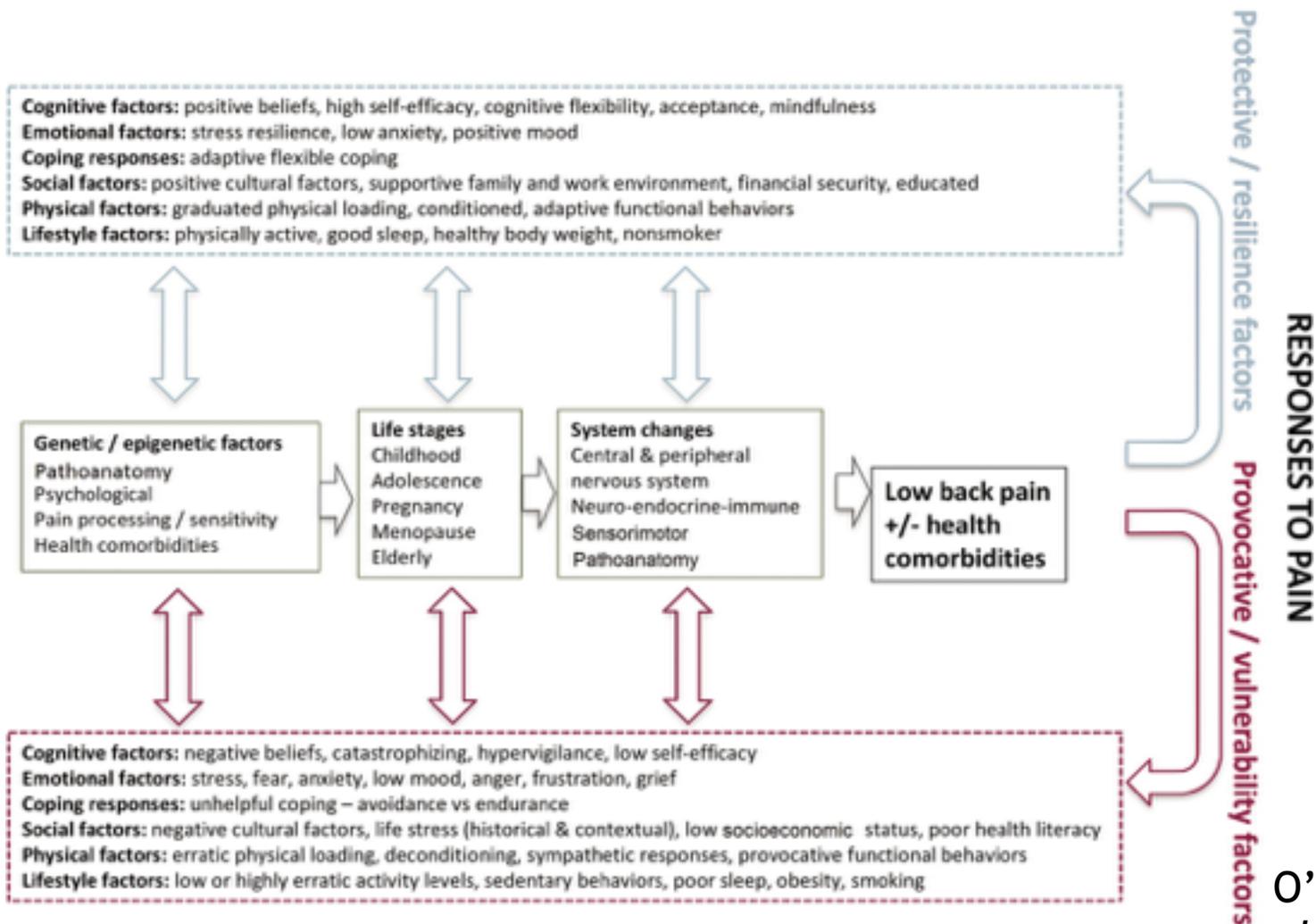
9. Overall, how bothersome has your back pain been in the last 2 weeks?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very much	Extremely
<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

Total score (all 9): _____ Sub Score (Q6-9): _____

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1b. What are the predictors of MSK pain?



O'Sullivan *et al*, 2018

Identify modifiable vs nonmodifiable factors influencing pain and behaviors

1b. What are the predictors of MSK pain?

See Hruschak, Iles and Clark papers

1b. What are the predictors of MSK pain?

1c. How to prevent MSK pain- best current evidence

See de Campos and Louw papers

1c. How to prevent MSK pain- best current evidence

See Steffens and Searle papers

2. So what? How do we apply this to working from home?

- Pain is multifactorial
- Recognise that WFH brings both threats and opportunities in the context of managing MSK pain
- Threats- anything which may tip balance for any individual towards a pain provocative state, towards a state where an episode of pain will have greater impact or which are barriers to recovery (cognitive, emotional, social, physical and lifestyle factors and poor coping responses)
- Opportunities- anything which will tip balance towards pain protective state, reduce impact of pain or facilitate recovery.

3. Now what?

- We need to identify and address all of the factors that result in MSK pain, or an increased impact of MSK pain, for those working from home
- Looking back at those questions “is the chair adjusted properly?” and “has the user been instructed in adopting suitable postures . . . with a straight back?” look pretty insignificant compared to all the other factors just discussed
- There is much more to pain than how we sit, what we sit on and where we work

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