

# Exercise, counseling cut days off from back pain in recruits

March 15 2013

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Neuromuscular exercise and counseling decrease the number of days off due to low back pain among young men serving in the military, according to a study published in the March 1 issue of *Spine*.

(HealthDay)—Neuromuscular exercise and counseling decrease the number of days off due to low back pain (LBP) among young men serving in the military, according to a study published in the March 1 issue of *Spine*.

Jaana H. Suni, P.T., Ph.D., from the UKK Institute for Health Promotion Research in Tampere, Finland, and colleagues prospectively assessed baseline incidence of different categories of LBP in successive cohorts of 719 conscripts from four companies for six months prior in the pre-study year. An intervention program was administered that aimed to improve conscripts' control of their lumbar neutral zone and specifically to avoid full lumbar flexion in all daily tasks. During the

intervention year, 690 conscripts of two new cohorts from the same companies were followed for six months.

The researchers found that in the intervention companies, the total number and incidence of off-duty days due to LBP were significantly decreased compared with controls (adjusted hazard ratio, 0.42). While not achieving [statistical significance](#), there was a trend toward decreases in the number of LBP cases, number of [health clinic](#) visits due to LBP, and number of the most severe cases.

"These findings provide evidence that exercise and education to improve control of the lumbar neutral zone have a prophylactic effect on LPB-related off-duty service days in the military environment when implemented as part of [military service](#) among young healthy men," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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