

Royal Adelaide Hospital

Spinal Outpatient Services Clinical Information Sheet

Clinical Condition	Non-specific spinal pain
Eligibility	Back or neck pain with or without limb pain but no clinical evidence of radiculopathy/myelopathy or red flags.
Pre-referral management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide reassurance and advice, promote activity/exercise as able • Recommend/prescribe appropriate use of simple analgesics +/- NSAIDs • Consider community-based options for assistance with self-management
Priority	<p>NON-URGENT</p> <p>Refer to the Spinal Outpatient Department via completion of the mandatory referral template (Fax: 08 7074 6247).</p> <p>SPECIALIST APPOINTMENT NOT REQUIRED</p> <p>Patients with non-specific spinal pain who are non-surgical candidates or who are not considering surgical intervention are not appropriate for referral to spinal outpatient services.</p>
Investigations required with referral	Spinal Imaging is not indicated for patients with acute/sub-acute non-specific spinal pain (in the absence of red flags). MRI may be considered if symptoms are not improving after 12 weeks. Include copies of any relevant investigation reports with referral.
Discharge Criteria/information	Discharge following improvement/resolution of symptoms and/or surgical management options no longer being considered. In most cases of non-specific spinal pain community-based management supported by a General Practitioner is most appropriate.
Fact sheets	Refer to www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/lumbardisorders (clinician information), and: www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/lowbackpain for patient information

For more information:
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www.sahealth.gov.au