Back Pain
Objectives

• To list the causes of back pain
• To list the “red flags” in back pain
• To understand the management in primary care for acute and chronic back pain
Causes

- Prolapsed intervertebral disc
- Osteoarthritis
- Malignancy
- Vertebral fracture
- Infection
- Inflammation
- Scoliosis/kyphosis
- No cause found
Red flags

- Night pain
- worsening pain despite medication
- thoracic back pain
- neurological signs
- Age young or old
Case histories

• What is the diagnosis?
• What tests, if any?
• What is the management?
  • drug
  • Non-drug
Case History 1

- 24 year old man
- acute back pain whilst lifting
- radiation to right leg
- no neurological signs
Case history 2

- 67 year old man
- low back pain radiating to buttocks
- night pain
- difficulty walking
- vertebral tenderness
Case History 3

- 26 year old man
- 3 year history worsening low back pain
- radiation to buttocks
- limited lumbar spine movements
Case history 4

• 45 year old woman
• 3 years worsening low back pain
• difficulty mobilising
• examination unremarkable
• off work
• no response to simple analgesia
Management

• Return to activity as soon as possible
• drugs for acute and chronic pain
• non-drug treatments
  • physio
  • exercise
  • complementary therapies