

# 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