

Royal Adelaide Hospital

Neurosurgical 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>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 Neurosurgery 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.

For more information

Neurosurgery Outpatient
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