BACK FACTS

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE BACK PAIN?
31 million Americans experience low-back pain at any given time. Low-back pain is the leading cause of disability worldwide.

Back pain is the second most common reason American adults visit a doctor, behind upper-respiratory infections.

9 percent of hospital and emergency room visits are due to back pain.

COSTS:
Americans spend at least $50 billion each year on back pain. 1 in 5 people who develop low back pain from injury will develop chronic back pain, lasting more than one year.

80 percent of the costs are incurred by 20 percent of people who develop chronic low back pain.

WHO IS AT RISK?
Risk factors for back pain:
Age, Fitness Level, Pregnancy, Weight Gain, Genetics, Lifting at Work

People age 45–64 have the highest rate of back pain. People who are obese or who smoke are more likely to have back pain as are people who are mostly inactive.

TRENDS
Back pain has become a bigger burden on society in the past 20 years.

1990: ranked 6th most burdensome disease for mortality/poor health

2010: ranked 3rd behind heart disease and COPD

Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the largest percentage of missed work (63%) were due to overexertion. Of that 36 percent were caused by back injury.

Low back pain will increase substantially as baby boomers age due to the disc deterioration in older people.

TREATMENT
27 percent of people with back pain don't seek help.

3 in 4 people with back pain use pain medication to relieve symptoms.

As many as 30 million Americans see a chiropractor.

15 percent of people with back pain use an alternative method, such as yoga, to alleviate symptoms.

Less than 10 percent of people who go to a doctor for back pain will have a condition that may require surgery.

PREVENTION
These things can keep your back healthy:

Good posture, Comfortable shoes, Proper Work Station Setup

Bend knees while lifting, Quit Smoking, Sleep on side with knees bent

Tufts MC can help with your back pain. Visit our Spine Center website to learn more.