

JOHN LANT & PARTNERS

OSTEOPATHS

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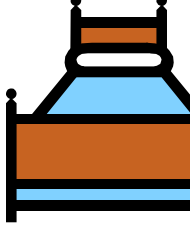


Advice Sheets AS7: Choosing a Bed (Page 1 of 3)

Questions to ask first ask yourself:

- How long have you had it? Is it more than eight to ten years old?
- Has the mattress gone lumpy and uneven?
- Can you feel the springs easily?
- Do you and your partner roll together unintentionally?
- Do you wake up feeling stiff or with neck or back pain?

Hints for buying a bed:-

1. Spend time trying out different beds for firmness. Don't be misled by the term 'orthopedic' – it is often the case that these beds are too hard and far from easing the back, a hard bed can make it worse. On the other hand a very soft bed makes the spine sag, stretching and straining the ligaments that support it. You need to make your own assessment of it taking into consideration your weight and build, size and age and your preferred sleeping position.
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2. Lie on the bed and stay on it for as long as you can in the position you normally sleep in
 3. Always take your sleeping partner with you
 4. Lie on your back and slide your hand between the small of your back and the mattress
Can you slide your hand through fairly easily? = It is probably quite right.
Is there a gap? = It is probably too hard.
Is it a struggle to push your hand through? = It is probably too soft.

Mattresses

There are a number of different types available and which one you choose will be based entirely on your personal preference and available budget.

- Spring interior mattresses are the most common:
- Open coil
- Pocketed spring
- Continuous springing

They vary in price and degree of firmness from soft to rigid

Foam Mattresses are available in a wide range of densities, qualities and levels of firmness. Some do not need regular turning, which can help avoid a bad back.

Other non-sprung options to consider are water beds

Sleeping positions:

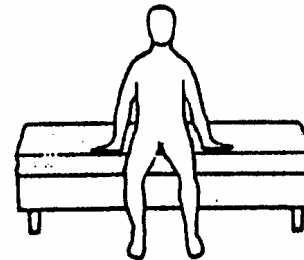
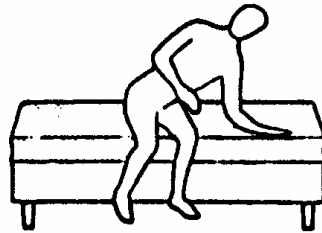
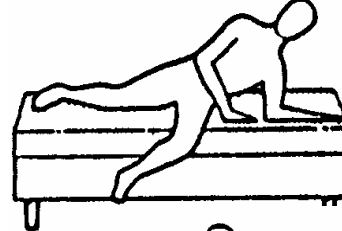
1. A good supportive pillow is important. The aim of a pillow is to support the neck and not the head and ideally the neck vertebrae should be kept in a continued line with the vertebrae of the chest.
2. Although there is no 'best' position to sleep in, too many pillows can provoke neck pain. One thick pillow or two thin pillows may be adequate.



3. Some people find lying on their side with a pillow between their knees can help with back pain.
4. If you lie mostly on your back, you may find it most comfortable to place a pillow under the knees.

5. When getting out of bed:

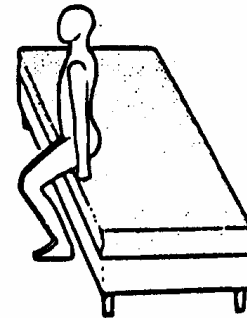
- A. Roll onto the pain free side with both legs toward the edge of the bed, raise onto one elbow while dropping both legs over the side of the bed



- B. Push up with your arms to get to the sitting position. Sit upright for a moment then slide towards the edge of the bed.

- C. Place the feet firmly on the floor, tucked in close to the bed.

- D. Brace the back, edge forwards and straighten the knees.



IS YOUR BED PART OF YOUR BACK PROBLEM? OSTEOPATHS ADVISE ...

Osteopaths treat *many* disorders of the body's structure but they are perhaps the best known effective treatment of back pain.

However, osteopaths see back pain sufferers of all ages and can offer advice on lifestyles which exacerbate problems. One frequently asked question is what sort of bed should I choose?'

Seven tips for back sufferers are:

1. Be sure the mattress isn't too heavy for you to turn
2. The mattress should be firm enough to support the weight of your body without sagging
3. However, it should also have sufficient 'give' to support and cushion
4. Consider non-allergenic bedding materials.
5. The mattress should be porous and the base needs to have air holes if it is a divan or a slatted base to allow for air circulation.
6. A good quality mattress with two heavy occupants will need a strong base
7. If you are likely to move home often, make sure the base can be dismantled easily

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