

# NATURAL WAYS to ease your aches

There isn't a one-size-fits-all therapy for back pain, but there are a whole raft of natural possibilities...

## Qi energy Unblock your pain

Actress Rula Lenska has suffered chronic back pain for years. 'Doctors said it was the result of weak ligaments, and stilettos, and couldn't offer any real remedies,' she says. 'For 40 years I struggled with pain, to the point where some days I had to wear a back brace. I tried everything, from shiatsu to Pilates, but nothing worked.'

**What's the story?** A qi energy therapist got Rula into the ancient South Korean practice that uses sound vibrations. Therapists press areas of the body to relieve blocked energy knots.

**Does it work?** 'After one 15-minute treatment, I felt different,' says Rula. After a few sessions her pain was almost non-existent.

● **Innersound Qi Energy treatments start at £40. Go to [www.innersound.org](http://www.innersound.org).**



A qi therapist helped Rula's back pain

## Aromatherapy Relieve your tension

Does the thought of an intense back massage bring you to tears? Trust us, gentle aromatherapy is something else.

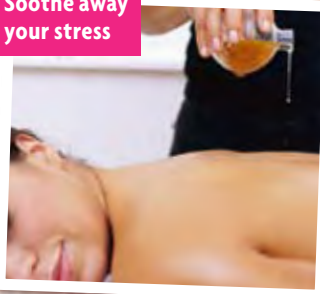
**Will it help?** Skin and senses absorb the oils and ease tension, and, in turn, pain.

**Will it hurt?** 'When muscles are in crisis, gentle healing is key,' says aromatherapist Emma Thompson at So Organic. 'If a hot-water bottle gives you relief then it's right for you. We mimic that heat with a spicy blend of essential oils, like

rosemary, black pepper and ginger. When tension and pain is created in one area, other parts of the body try to compensate. So we create a rebalancing full body massage.'

● **For essential oils, go to [www.soorganic.com](http://www.soorganic.com). For massage therapists nationwide, go to [www.ifaroma.com](http://www.ifaroma.com). Prices from £35.**

Soothe away your stress



# Bring back

## Acupuncture *Ease your chronic discomfort*

**S**omehow, it feels a bit odd to be treating pain with pointy needles, but acupuncture can be the pain relief breakthrough you didn't think could exist.

**Does it hurt?** Needles are so gently inserted, you'll barely feel them and you won't be bristling like a hedgehog or necessarily have them placed at the site of the pain. 'For back problems, we use six to 12 very fine needles,' says practitioner Eli Afshar. 'Each treatment is tailored to your personal health needs.'

**Does it work?** Converts say yes! 'Almost every back pain has some underlying lifestyle imbalance, and acupuncture can relieve pain by helping restore the energy balance within you,' says Eli. 'It has an immediate effect, giving you a real sense of relief – although chronic back pain needs a few sessions.'

● **Call Eli Afshar on 07785 258 499 or find a practitioner at the British Acupuncture Council at [www.acupuncture.org.uk](http://www.acupuncture.org.uk). Treatments cost around £40-£50 for one hour.**



Needles are inserted at strategic points



### HATE PILLS?

Ease back pain with Willow Bark & Devil's Claw, £9.95, [www.napiers.net](http://www.napiers.net). It's a traditional blend of tinctures.

## Bowen Technique *Sort out your aches*

**T**his fantastic therapy seems to be one of the well-being industry's best kept secrets.

**What's it like?** Gentle. The rolling massage moves trigger an energy release that helps the body rebalance itself. The therapist then leaves the room to allow your body to respond to the moves.

**Does it work?** Yes! We know Bowen enthusiasts who've found relief



Hands-on healing

after car accidents and severe PMS.

**Will it hurt?** 'Don't expect deep massage,' says therapist Nikke Ariff. 'This is soft tissue therapy that takes place through loose clothes.' It's often fast acting so you may feel better after just one session.

● **Call Nikke Ariff on 020 7388 9818, or go to [www.bowentherapists.com](http://www.bowentherapists.com). From £25 for an hour.**

## Alexander Technique *Release your stress*

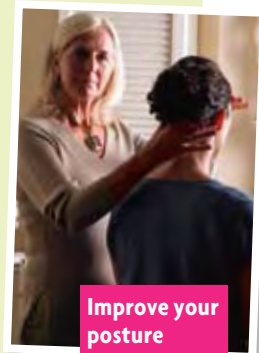
**V**ictoria Beckham is currently practising this body alignment therapy to help with her hunched shoulders. It introduces a better way of standing, sitting and moving, coupled with better breathing. One sufferer describes feeling like the leaning tower of Pisa when her posture was corrected: 'I was shocked how misaligned I was, but immediately friends told me I looked taller, slimmer and more confident! I can't recommend it enough. Definitely worth the investment.'

**Is there a DVD?** No. This needs to be taught one-to-one or in group lessons. The teacher will use props to help you improve coordination in relation to your surroundings.

### Who benefits?

Anyone with pain from poor posture, accidents and injuries. It's a wonderful all-round mind/physical body therapy, easy to learn and affordable. Six session courses cost less than £50!

● **Go to [www.stat.org.uk](http://www.stat.org.uk).**



Improve your posture

## Natural born painkillers?

The right supplement could do so much for you and your pain:

**Vitamin D3** Some find it really helps ease back and joint pain. Take 1000iu a day and see if you benefit. Life Extension Vitamin D3 (above), £16.95 for 250 capsules, [www.victoriahealth.com](http://www.victoriahealth.com). Take one a day.

**Vitamin B12** Could help with lower back pain because it encourages anti-stress hormones and energises. Try Solgar Methylcobalamin Vitamin B12 (below), £9.15 for 30 nuggets, [www.solgar.co.uk](http://www.solgar.co.uk).

**Litozin** (left), £19.75 for 120 capsules, [www.victoriahealth.com](http://www.victoriahealth.com), contains an extract of rose hip, plus compounds similar to glucosamine that help with the long-term repair of joint tissue. Take two, three times a day.

