

IELTS LISTENING – People with back pain
S49T4



IELTS listening People with back pain listening practice test has 10 questions belongs to the Leisure & Entertainment subject.

ANNOUNCER: Today's Health Counsel is presented by Paula Clayburg, who is the chief Counsellor at Liverpool's famous pain clinic – The Wilton Clinic. Paula...

31 Which column of the bar chart represents the figures quoted?

1,000,000
750,000
500,000
250,000
0

People with back pain (UK daily figures)

☐ A
☐ B
☐ C

32 According to the speaker, the main cause of back pain in women is

☐ A pregnancy.
☐ B osteoporosis.
☐ C lack of exercise.

33 As treatment for back pain the Clinic mainly recommends

☐ A pain killers.
☐ B relaxation therapy.
☐ C exercise routines.

34 The back is different from other parts of the body because

☐ A it is usually better at self-repair.
☐ B a back injury is usually more painful.
☐ C its response to injury often results in more damage.

35 Bed rest is advised

☐ A for a maximum of two days.
☐ B for extreme pain only.
☐ C for pain lasting more than two days.

PAULA CLAYBURG: Do you know what Prince Charles, Seve Ballesteros and Elizabeth Taylor have in common? They all suffer from chronic back pain. In fact, bad backs are one of the most common health problems today, affecting people in all walks of life. The most recent available figures show that about a **q31 quarter of a million people** are incapacitated with back pain every day.



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And many sufferers don't know the cause or the solution to their problem. The majority of our patients at the clinic tend to be women. They are especially vulnerable because of pregnancy but also because of **q32 osteoporosis**, which I personally believe to be the major cause of problems for women. I have many women patients who say they have completely given up exercise because the pain makes them so miserable. But of course, that starts up a vicious circle. Bed rest, giving up exercise and pain killers are traditional responses to back pain but, although there are many excellent drugs on the market, at our clinic we are beginning to realise the unique benefits of **q33 relaxation therapy**. Other specialists in the field make a strong case for certain types of exercise, but in our experience, they are easily mishandled and can lead to more harm than good.

Now, let's look at some of the reasons why back pain is developing into such a unique menace. In general, the body is pretty good at self-repair. A strain or a blow to a limb, though painful at the time, generally resolves itself. But the body's **q34 response to back injury** can be very counterproductive. When pain strikes, we attempt to keep the back as immobile as possible, which makes the muscles tense up. Research shows that they often go into spasm, which causes further twisting of the spine. A vicious circle is underway. The second mistake we often make when stricken with extreme back pain is to go to bed and stay there. Although at the clinic we recognise that a short rest in bed can be helpful... **q35 up to two days**... any longer makes our back muscles become weaker and unable to hold up our spine. The pain, therefore, becomes worse.

36 Being overweight

☐ A is a major source of back pain.
☐ B worsens existing back pain.
☐ C reduces the effectiveness of exercise.

Questions 37-40

Choose the correct letters A-C.

	Strongly recommended	Recommended in certain circumstances	Not recommended
	A	B	C
37 Buy special orthopaedic chairs	☐	☐	☐
38 Buy shock-absorbing inserts	☐	☐	☐
39 Wear flat shoes	☐	☐	☐
40 Buy TENS machine	☐	☐	☐

Another problem is being overweight. Anyone a stone or more overweight who already has back pain is not doing himself any favours: though it won't actually set it off in the first place, the weight will increase the strain and **q36 make things worse**. The British diet could be partially to blame for the increase in back pain: over the last ten years, the average weight of men has risen by 11 lbs and of women by 9 lbs. So much for the causes and aggravations of pain. But what can we do to help?

There are many ways in which simple day-to-day care can make all the difference. The first point to watch of course is 'weight'. If you are overweight, a diet will make all the difference. Also, studies have shown that just one hour sitting in a slouched position can strain ligaments in the back which can take months to heal. At the clinic, we have come to the conclusion that the major cause of the problem is not with the design of chairs, as some have suggested, but in the way we sit in them. It can be useful to get special orthopaedic chairs, but remember the most important improvement should be in our posture.

Another enemy of your back is, of course, your beds. If your bed doesn't give enough support, back muscles and ligaments work all night trying to correct spinal alignment, so you wake up with a tired aching back. Try out an **q37 orthopaedic mattress** or a spring slatted bed. Research shows that both can be beneficial for certain types of back pain.

Another hazard for your back are the shock waves which travel up your spine when you walk, known as heel strike. A real find for our patients has been the **q38 shock-absorbing shoe** insert. A cheap but very effective solution. And you might be better off **q39 avoiding shoes with heels** higher than 1 and 1/2 inches. Though absolutely flat shoes can be a solution for some, others find their posture suffers. Finally a word about the state-of-the-art relief – the TENS machine -a small battery-powered gadget which delivers subliminal electrical pulses to the skin. Our experience indicates that your money is **q40 better spent on the more old-fashioned** remedies.

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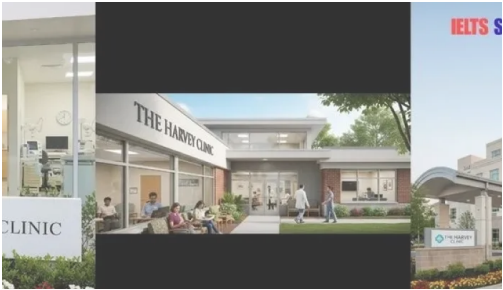
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