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Short bouts of daily movement for people with chronic low back pain

Submission date
15/05/2026

Recruitment status
Recruiting

Registration date
19/11/2026

Overall study status
Ongoing

Last Edited
19/11/2026

Condition category
Musculoskeletal Diseases

[_] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[_] Statistical analysis plan
[_] Results
[_] Individual participant data
[X] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
Chronic low back pain is common and can make it difficult for people to stay active. Although physical activity is recommended, many people find structured exercise programmes difficult to follow due to pain, fatigue, or lack of confidence.
This study aims to test whether a different approach encouraging very short, flexible bouts of movement throughout the day ("Snacktivity") is practical, acceptable, and potentially helpful for people with chronic low back pain.

Who can participate?
Adults aged 18 years or older with chronic low back pain lasting longer than 3 months can take part. Participants must be living independently and able to engage in light movement. People with serious spinal conditions, specific causes of back pain, or major health issues that limit movement will not be eligible.

What does the study involve?
Participants will be randomly allocated to one of two groups:
1. A Snacktivity group, involving a 6-week programme encouraging short, frequent movement in daily life, supported by an introductory session and weekly check-ins
2. A comparison group, receiving standard advice for managing low back pain
Participants will complete questionnaires at the start of the study, after 6 weeks, and at a 12-week follow-up. Some participants may also take part in interviews about their experiences.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Participants may benefit from increased confidence, improved understanding of movement, and a better ability to manage daily activity with back pain.
Risks are expected to be low but may include temporary increases in pain, discomfort, or fatigue when moving. Participants are encouraged to adapt or stop activities if needed.

Where is the study run from?
The study is run from the University of Birmingham (UK), with participation taking place in the community and/or online.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
September 2026 to October 2027

Who is funding the study?
University of Birmingham (UK)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Andrew Soundy, A.A.Soundy@bham.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)
Principal investigator, Scientific, Public

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Study information

Scientific Title
Snacktivity and brief movement for everyday life in people with chronic low back pain

Acronym
Snacktivity LBP

Study objectives
Primary Aim:
The primary objective of this randomised pilot study is to assess the feasibility and acceptability of delivering a valuesinformed Snacktivity intervention to adults with CLBP within a parallelgroup randomised design.

Secondary Objectives:
To explore changes in:
1. Recruitment and retention rates
2. Selfefficacy for brief movement
3. Hope, adaptation and emotional responses
4. Engagement in brief bouts of daily movement

5. To examine participant experiences of Snacktivity intervention considering pain management, daily routines, and perceived burden
6. To generate preliminary data to inform a future controlled trial

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Submitted 15/05/2026, University of Birmingham Research Ethics Committee (Research Ethics, Governance and Integrity, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston Campus, Birmingham, B15 2TT, United Kingdom; +441214148825; s.l.cottam@bham.ac.uk), ref: ERN_6273

Primary study design
Interventional

Allocation
Randomized controlled trial

Masking
Blinded (masking used)

Control
Active

Assignment
Parallel

Purpose
Health services research, Supportive care, Treatment

Study type(s)

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Chronic non-specific low back pain (CLBP)

Interventions
Participants will be randomised using a computer-generated random allocation sequence in a 1:1 ratio to either the Snacktivity intervention group or the comparator (usual care) group. Simple randomisation will be used without stratification. Allocation concealment will be ensured through a centralised electronic system, with the allocation sequence generated and stored by a member of the research team not involved in recruitment or baseline assessment. Group allocation will be revealed only after completion of baseline measures.

Participants will be randomly allocated to one of two groups:
1. A Snacktivity group, which includes a 6-week programme with an initial session, weekly check-ins, and guidance on using short movement breaks in daily life
2. A comparison group, which will receive standard advice about managing low back pain

Snacktivity LBP: Brief Movement for Everyday Life Intervention:
This will be a 6-week intervention with baseline, post- and follow-up (12-week) assessments. An initial in-person or online group session will introduce education on Snacktivity principles, the

Model of Emotions, Adaptation and Hope (MEAH) and motivational interviewing screening and support, and an introduction to the home-based Snacktivity booklet. Weekly check-in with trained student physiotherapists to identify MEAH ratings and updates around improvement.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
1. Feasibility outcomes (recruitment, retention, adherence, acceptability, and data completeness) measured using study-specific feasibility data collection forms, recruitment logs, adherence records, and participant feedback questionnaires at baseline, 6-week (post-intervention), and 12-week (follow-up)

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Confidence for engaging in brief movement (Snacktivity-specific self-efficacy) measured using the Snacktivity Self-Efficacy Scale (S-SES) at baseline, 6-week (post-intervention), and 12-week (follow-up)
2. Pain self-efficacy (confidence in functioning despite pain) measured using the Pain Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (PSEQ) at baseline, 6-week (post-intervention), and 12-week (follow-up)
3. Cognitive flexibility (ability to adapt thinking and behaviour) measured using the Cognitive Flexibility Scale at baseline, 6-week (post-intervention), and 12-week (follow-up)
4. Emotion regulation strategies (cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression) measured using the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) at baseline, 6-week (post-intervention), and 12-week (follow-up)
5. Emotional adaptation to movement-related challenges (hope, adaptation, energy, and emotional valence) measured using the Model of Emotions, Adaptation and Hope (MEAH) questionnaire at baseline, 6-week (post-intervention), and 12-week (follow-up)
6. Low back pain-related disability (functional limitation) measured using the Oswestry Disability Index (ODI) at baseline, 6-week (post-intervention), and 12-week (follow-up)
7. Health-related quality of life (physical and mental health status) measured using the Short Form-12 (SF-12), including Physical Component Summary (PCS) and Mental Component Summary (MCS) scores, at baseline, 6-week (post-intervention), and 12-week (follow-up)

Completion date
15/10/2027

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Adults aged ≥18 years
2. Diagnosis of CLBP (≥3 months duration). CLBP will be defined as pain in the lumbar region persisting for 3 months or longer
3. Back pain which is not attributable to a specific cause, i.e., people with non-specific CLBP will be recruited
4. Living independently in the community
5. Able to stand and move with or without discomfort and able to engage with light physical movement as part of daily activities
6. Able to provide informed consent

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Mixed

Lower age limit
18 Years

Upper age limit
88 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
0

Key exclusion criteria
1. Acute low back pain (<3 months)
2. Serious spinal pathology (e.g., fracture, malignancy, infection) or uncontrolled comorbidities (including major psychiatric conditions, uncontrolled diabetes or heart failure)
3. Specific causes of CLBP, e.g., lumbar radiculopathy
4. Neurological conditions severely limiting movement
5. Current participation in structured exercise rehabilitation (>2 sessions/week)
6. Pregnancy

Date of first enrolment
07/09/2026

Date of final enrolment
15/09/2027

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
University of Birmingham
School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences
Y14, UoB Edgbaston
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Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Birmingham

ROR
https://ror.org/03angcq70

Funder(s)

Funder type

Funder Name
University of Birmingham

Alternative Name(s)

Funding Body Type
Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Universities (academic only)

Location
United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary
Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Protocol file			15/05/2026	No	No