



OSCE Checklist: Back Pain History Taking

Opening the consultation	
1	Wash your hands and don PPE if appropriate
2	Introduce yourself to the patient including your name and role
3	Confirm the patient's name and date of birth
4	Explain that you'd like to take a history from the patient
5	Gain consent to proceed with taking a history
Presenting complaint	
6	Use open questioning to explore the patient's presenting complaint
History of presenting complaint	
7	Site: ask about the location of the back pain
8	Onset: clarify when the back pain first started and if it the onset was sudden or gradual
9	Character: ask about the specific characteristics of the back pain
10	Radiation: ask if the back pain moves anywhere else
11	Associated symptoms: ask if there are any other associated symptoms
12	Time course: ask how the back pain has changed over time
13	Exacerbating or relieving factors: ask if anything makes the back pain worse or better
14	Severity: ask how severe the back pain is on a scale of 0-10
15	Screen for other key symptoms including red flag features
16	Explore the patient's ideas, concerns and expectations
17	Summarise the patient's presenting complaint
Systemic enquiry	
18	Screen for relevant symptoms in other body systems
Past medical and surgical history	
19	Ask if the patient has any medical conditions including previous back problems
20	Ask if the patient has undergone any relevant surgical procedures
21	Ask if the patient has any allergies and if so, clarify what kind of reaction they had to the substance
Drug history	
22	Ask if the patient is currently taking any prescribed medications or over-the-counter remedies

Family history	
23	Ask the patient if there is any family history of back problems, inflammatory arthritis, malignancy or cardiovascular disease
Social history	
24	Explore the patient's general social context
25	Take a smoking history
26	Take an alcohol history
27	Ask about recreational drug use
28	Gather details about the patient's occupation
29	Ask about any hobbies which may be relevant to their back pain
Closing the consultation	
30	Summarise the salient points of the history back to the patient and ask if they feel anything has been missed
31	Thank the patient for their time
32	Dispose of PPE appropriately and wash your hands
Key communication skills	
33	Active listening
34	Summarising
35	Signposting

Read the full guide at
[geekymedics.com](https://www.geekymedics.com)



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