

## **Osteopathy and beds**

Back pain and stiffness in the morning may be due to your bed. Here is some valuable information concerning choosing a bed:

- 1** You should turn a mattress every six weeks to three months. If you find it difficult or you live on your own, foam or latex mattresses can be bought that do not require turning.
- 2** When choosing a mattress it is important that the mattress is right for your particular type of spine. Just because it is “orthopaedic”, it doesn’t mean it is best for you. There is one simple test that will tell you. Lie on the bed on your back. Try and slide your hand under your back. If you cannot get your hand under your spine at all, the mattress is too soft. If you can get your hand under your spine and there is space between your hand and back, the mattress is too firm. If you can slide your hand under your spine and the mattress supports your back, this is just right.
- 3** When choosing a bed in the shop, lie on it for at least 20 minutes. Some shops may offer a thirty day trial period.
- 4** When considering how much to spend on a bed, try to spend as much as can be afforded. We will be spending approximately one third of our lives in bed so it is a wise investment. A very good bed should last about 8 to 10 years.
- 5** Make sure the base can easily be dismantled. Remember you may move in the future.
- 6** If there are two of you, a larger bed is wise. You and your partner may be different body types and may therefore require a mattress that has a different tension each side.