• The primary aim is to investigate if taking a short course of opioid analgesics reduces pain in people with acute low back pain or neck pain.
• The OPAL study will also investigate if taking opioid analgesics improves other outcomes (e.g. physical functioning), is reasonably tolerated and cost effective, and does not result in long-term opioid misuse.

Aims:
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Methods:
• Approximately 350 participants with acute low back pain or neck pain will be randomised to receive opioid analgesics or placebo for up to 6 weeks and be followed up for 3 months for effectiveness and cost-effectiveness outcomes. We will additionally assess the use and risk of misuse of opioid analgesics for up to 12 months.
• All participants will also receive guideline care from a general practitioner, including advice, reassurance, and other guideline recommended treatments such as referrals to physiotherapy as required.