

Alexandra's
ELEMENTS
The Spa

Back Care Program

Do's and Don'ts
Exercises for Low Back Pain

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Do's

- Do the prescribed exercises when your pain has subsided to prevent further back problems.
- Change positions frequently.
- Do use a heating pad intermittently on your back area.
- Do sleep on a firm mattress and sit on a slightly higher chair, preferably with armrest. To get out of the bed, lay on your side on the border of the bed so that your legs dangle, and then, sit up on your side. Do the reverse movement to lay down on the bed.
- When making a bed, do so from a kneeling position.
- Do use your hands to assist you from rising or settling into a high chair, for holding onto a rail on stairs, and to assist you in bending to pick up something.
- When you cough or sneeze, round your back and bend your knees slightly.
- Avoid exercises or activities that arch and strain the low back (i.e. backward bends or frontward bends to touch toes), instead, do gentle, non-impact sports like swimming or stationary bicycle.
- Avoid sudden movements; learn how to move more deliberately.
- Avoid bending from the waist only; bend or stoop with the hips and knees and not your back.
- Avoid lifting heavy objects higher than the waist or anything which you can't handle with ease.
- Always turn and face objects you want to lift and keep them close to your body.
- In mopping, vacuuming, raking etc., always work with the tool close to the body. Never use a "giant" step with a long reach in these types of activities.
- Sit down to dress socks and shoes and do not bend from the waist while trying to balance on one foot.
- Women should wear low heels.

Don'ts

- Don't do any exercises when your back is in acute pain. Be very cautious about doing other than prescribed exercises. Avoid sit-ups and bending exercises.
- Don't sit in one position for more than half hour; rather alternate sitting with standing. Avoid soft, low seats.
- Don't drive a car when your back is in acute pain. Use a wire wicker type of back seat support.
- Don't stand in a partially bent position for any length of time.

Sitting



Good



Bad

Standing



Good



Bad

Lifting



Good



Bad

Exercises for low back pain

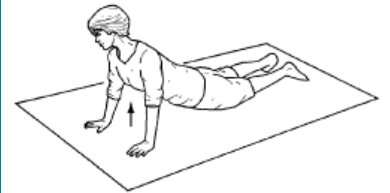


- Some exercises should be avoided when you have acute low back pain. If while doing these exercises, your pain worsens or you have new pain or symptoms, stop the exercises and discuss your symptoms with your doctor or physical therapist.
- Stop exercising and let your doctor or physical therapist know right away if you have any change in your bowel or bladder control or any increase in weakness in your leg or foot.

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Press-Ups:

Keep your back and buttocks relaxed and use your arms to press up. Concentrate on keeping your hips down and push up your upper body as high as possible.



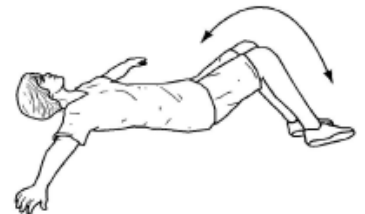
Double Knee to Chest:

Grasp both your knees with your hands and pull toward your shoulders. Hold the stretch for 1 second. Let your knees return, but keep them bent at arms-length.



Lumbar Spine Stretches:

Lie on your back. Bring your knees towards your chest. Rotate your knees towards the pain.



Side-lying Position:

Lie on your side and face forward. Have both arms straight in front and bend your knees. Turn your head as you move your top arm across your body as far as you can. Keep your arm in place and turn your head back to the starting position. Look back again and turn your head farther if you can. Bring your head and arm back to the starting position. Relax and repeat 10 times on each side.



Hamstring Stretch:

Lie on your back with your legs out straight. Raise your leg up and put your hands around the upper leg for support. Slowly straighten the raised knee until you feel a stretch in the back of the upper leg. Hold, then relax and repeat 10 times on each leg.

**Standing Arch:**

Stand with your feet apart and hands on the small of your back with fingers pointing backwards. Bend backwards at the waist, supporting the trunk with your hands. Keep your knees straight. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 3 to 5 times.

**Side Glides:**

Stand at a right angle to the wall about 2 feet out from the wall. Lean your shoulder into the wall. Move your hips toward the wall, keeping your legs together and your knees straight. Return to the starting position.



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Always consult your physician or other qualified health provider regarding a medical condition.

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