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Low Back Program

These exercises are used to control or improve low back pain. They should be done 3 - 5 times a day to provide maximum benefit. These exercises are best done on a firm surface such as a floor or firm bed. If any of these exercises aggravate your condition, they should be stopped for that session.



- 1) **Pelvic Tilt:** Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat. Tighten stomach muscles to flatten back against the floor. Hold for 5 seconds, then relax. Repeat 10 - 20 times.



- 2) **Single Knee To Chest:** Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat. Using both hands, grasp one leg, below the knee, and pull to chest. Hold 5 seconds and relax. Repeat with other leg. Perform 5 - 10 times for each leg.



- 3) **Double Knee To Chest:** Lie on back with knees bent and feet flat. Using hands, bring one knee to chest, then the other. Hold for 5 seconds. Lower one leg at a time. Maintain Pelvic Tilt (see #1) while lowering leg. Repeat 5 - 10 times.



- 4) **Partial Sit-Ups:** Lie on back with knees bent and feet flat. Assume Pelvic Tilt position. With arms out in front of you, tuck chin and curl upper body up to clear shoulder blades off of floor. Hold 5 seconds and relax. Begin with 10 repetitions, add 1 per day as strength improves.



- 5) **Diagonal Sit-Up:** Lie on back with knees bent and feet flat. Assume the pelvic tilt position. Do a partial sit-up with the left hand reaching for the right knee. Hold 5 seconds and relax. Repeat in the opposite direction. Begin with 10 repetitions to each side, add 1 per day to each side as strength improves.



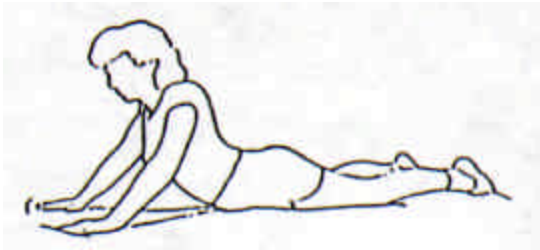
- 6) **Bent Knee Roll:** Lie on back with knees bent and feet flat. Gently roll knees to one side. Hold for 10 seconds. Return to starting position and roll to opposite side. Repeat 10 - 20 times to each side.



- 7) **Bridging:** Lie on back with knees bent and feet flat. Lift buttocks off of floor, as high as tolerable, and hold for 5 seconds. Slowly lower and relax. Repeat 5 - 10 times.



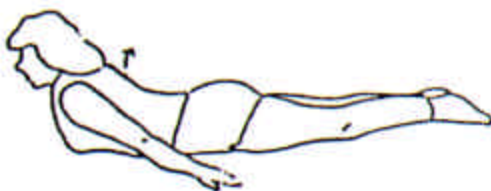
- 8) **Prone On Elbows:** Lie on your stomach. Raise up on your forearms and relax for 2 minutes. Allow back to sway. Increase time by 1 minute per day up to 10 minutes maximum.



- 9) **Press Up:** Lie on your stomach. Place hands flat on table or floor at shoulder level. Push up while keeping hips on the floor or table, allowing back to sway. Hold for 5 seconds and relax. Repeat 5 - 10 times.



- 10) **Prone Arm Lift:** Lie on stomach with arms reaching above and next to your head. Lift one arm off of the table or floor and hold for 5 seconds. Return to beginning position. Repeat with alternate arm. Repeat 10 times for each arm, adding 1 repetition per day as strength improves. Progress to lifting both arms together as strength improves.



- 11) **Thoracic Extension:** Lie on stomach with arms at side. Keep chin tucked into chest, forehead resting of floor or table. Lift upper body off of floor, keeping chin tucked in. Hold 5 seconds and relax. Repeat 10 times, adding 1 repetition per day as strength improves.

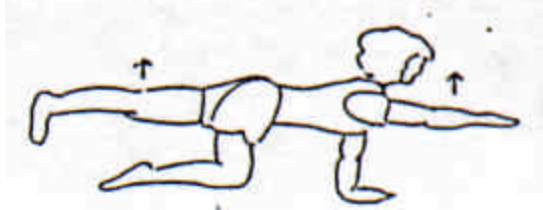


- 12) **Prone Leg Lift:** Lie on Stomach. Raise leg, from hip, with knee straight, 4 - 6 inches off of floor or table. Hold 5 seconds and relax. Repeat with opposite leg. Repeat 10 times, adding 1 repetition per day as strength improves.

- 13) **Opposite Arm - Leg Lift:** Lie on stomach with arms reaching above and next to your head. Lift the left arm as you lift your right leg. Hold them straight for 5 seconds and relax. Repeat with alternate arm and leg. Repeat 10 times for each arm, adding 1 repetition per day as strength improves.



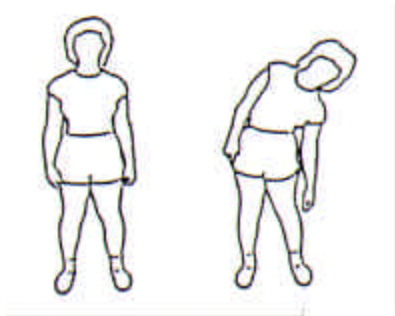
- 14) **Opposite Arm - Leg Life On Hands & Knees:** On hands and knees, lift left arm as you lift the right leg (straight) as a "Bird Dog on point." Maintain a flat back and level hips. Repeat with alternate arm and leg. Repeat 10 times for each arm, adding 1 repetition per day as strength improves.



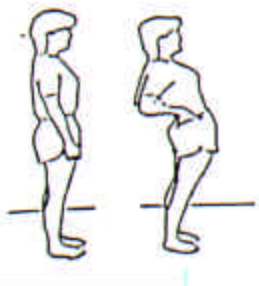
- 15) **Cat - Horse:** On hand and knees. Slowly arch back up as far as tolerated while tucking chin to chest. Hold this position for 5 seconds. Slowly let back sink into a "sway back" position, while lifting head level with back. Hold this position for 5 seconds. Repeat 30 times.



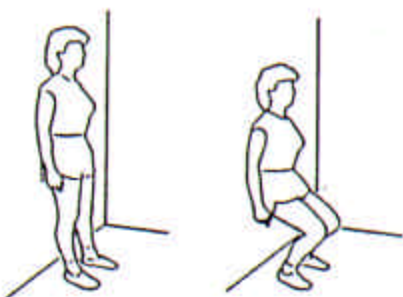
- 16) **Standing Side Bends:** Standing up straight. Bend to side as if sliding hand down outside of leg. Alternate to opposite side. Repeat 5 - 10 times each side.



- 17) **Standing Back Bends:** Stand upright with hands on lower back. Bend backward as far as comfortable. Hold 5 seconds and relax. Repeat 5-10 times.



- 18) **Wall Slides:** Stand with your back to a wall, feet shoulder width apart and 6 - 10 inches from the wall. Lean back against the wall. Slide down into a sitting position, flattening back against the wall. Hold sitting position for 10 seconds and return to standing position. Repeat 10 times, add 1 repetition per day as strength improves.



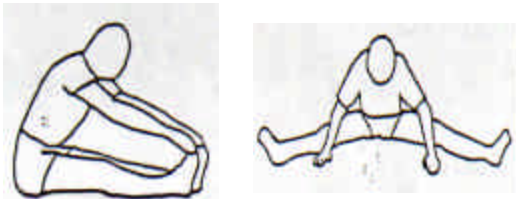


- 19) **Fire Hydrant:** On Hands and Knees. Lift right leg out to the side with knee bent. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat with opposite leg. Repeat 10 times for each leg, adding 1 repetition per day as strength improves.

Lower Body Stretching Exercises



- 20) **Supine Hamstring:** Lie on Back, raise leg to chest by bending at the hip, grasping the back of your thigh with both hands just above the knee. Slowly straighten your knee until you feel a stretch in the hamstrings at the back of the thigh. Hold 10 seconds, and repeat on opposite leg. Repeat 3 - 5 times for each leg.



- 21) **Seated Hamstring:** In a sitting position, Slowly lean forward to stretch leg. This can be performed with knees together or in a V-Leg position. Keep back flat while performing stretch. Hold 10 seconds, and repeat 3 - 5 times for each leg.



- 21) **Standing Hamstring:** Place one foot on a secure table or object 6 - 12 inches tall. Slowly lean upper body forward, keeping leg straight and toes pointing up. Do not “hump” back and maintain curve in lower back. Hold 10 seconds, and repeat 3 - 5 times for each leg.



- 22) **Hip Flexor:** Lie on back on the edge of a bed or table, hugging both knees. Lower one leg straight out, allowing it to hang over the edge of the table. Continue to hug opposite leg. Hold this position for 10 seconds. Return to the starting position and repeat on opposite side. Repeat 3 - 5 times each leg.



- 23) **Piriformis (Figure 4):** Lie flat on back with both knees bend and feet flat on floor. Cross right ankle onto left knee. Grasp behind left knee and slowly pull towards your chest. Hold for 10 seconds and slowly lower to beginning position. Reverse position and repeat 3 - 5 times for each leg.



- 24) **Piriformis (Trunk Twister):** Sit on floor or table. Cross right leg over left thigh, placing right foot outside of the left knee. Place left elbow on outside of right knee. Gently stretch by pushing right elbow into left knee. Keep back straight while stretching. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat for opposite side. Repeat 3 - 5 times for each side.



- 25) **Calf Stretch:** Stand facing a wall, with one foot in front of the other. Lean forward with your hands on the wall. Bend the front leg while keeping both heels on the floor. You should feel a gentle stretch in the back of your lower legs. Hold 10 seconds, repeat with the other leg forward. Repeat 3 - 5 times for both legs.



- 21) **Standing IT Band Stretch:** Stand, approximately 2 - 3 feet from a wall, with the involved side facing the wall. Place one hand on the wall and cross uninvolved leg over involved leg and lean into the wall. Place hand on uninvolved hip for overpressure. Hold for 10 seconds, repeat 3 - 5 times.



- 21) **Table IT Band Stretch:** Lie on back near edge of table. Let leg stretch over edge of table so that there is a full stretch on outside of hip and side of leg. Bend leg being stretched to 90° angle at the hip and keep knee straight. Place arms out to the side to maintain balance. Hold for 30 seconds, repeat on other side. Repeat 3 - 5 times for each leg.



- 22) **Quad Stretch:** Stand with involved knee bent. Gently pull heel toward buttocks, feeling a stretch in the front of the leg. Keep upper body straight, do not lean forward. To increase the stretch, pull with enough pressure to cause the involved knee to pass behind the uninvolved knee. Hold for 10 seconds, repeat 3 - 5 times.