

Home Exercise Program For Low Back Pain

If you have increased pain or discomfort, stop and call your health care provider.

General Information

Exercise is an important part of treating and preventing low back pain.

Back pain occurs if you move wrong or don't exercise. The most common cause is poor posture. Back pain is often the result of:

- sitting, standing or lying for a long time in a poor position
- repeated bending and twisting for a long time
- poor sitting posture.

Use a Correct Sitting Posture

- Make sure the chair you sit in has proper support for your lower back. You can add a lumbar support to hold the natural inward curve in your lower back. Tape a rolled up towel to the back of your chair or car seat for a simple lumbar support.
- Make sure your knees are even with your hips. If they are lower than your hip level, put a thick book or small stool under your feet.
- Raise your work to eye level when you can. This will keep you from bending forward.

Bend at Your Knees and Hips

Bending often or for a long time causes back pain. You may feel this pain when raking, gardening or cleaning. Be sure to bend at your knees and hips and keep your back straight. This takes the load off your back.



Change Positions Often



Most important, stand up and change your position every 30 to 60 minutes. Doing a standing back bend will help take stress off the muscles and ligaments that

support your low back when you sit.

- Put your hands just below your waist.
- Gently push your pelvis forward and lean back.
- Repeat 3 to 5 times every 30 to 60 minutes.

Start Moving

Walking is a simple and effective way to reduce or prevent back pain. It keeps the muscles that support your back healthy.

Walking increases blood flow to the muscles, ligaments and discs in your back. Start with five minutes a day and work up to 20 to 30 minutes each day.

(over)

Low Back Exercises

These exercises will help you get back to your regular activities with less pain. Do these exercises 3 times a day.

Stretch No. 1



- Lie on your stomach (as shown).
- Straighten your arms to press your upper body upward.
- Let your hips sag toward the floor.

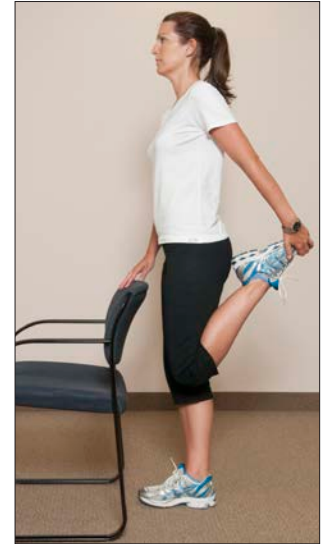
Stretch No. 2



- Place your hands on a wall at shoulder height.
- Place your right leg in front of your left leg.
- Bend your right leg.
- Keep your back leg straight. Make sure your foot is slightly turned out and your heel is on the floor.
- Lean into the wall. You should feel a gentle stretch in the calf of your right leg.

Stretch No. 3

- Stand by a sturdy chair or other object so you can maintain your balance. Stand straight.
- Hold your left foot with your left hand.
- Pull your heel toward your buttocks.
- You should feel a gentle stretch in the front of your thigh.



Stretch No. 4



- Get a sturdy stool or chair.
- Place your foot on the stool or chair.
- Put your hands on your hips.
- Slowly bend forward at your waist. Keep your back straight.
- You should feel a gentle stretch in the back of your thigh.