

Exercise for low back pain

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Exercise is an important adjunct to your treatment.

However, be sure to follow your doctor's instructions carefully. Do not

overdo exercise, particularly when begin-

ning. Start by trying the movements slowly and carefully. If

the exercise causes some mild discomfort, which lasts a few minutes, do not be alarmed. This will disappear as your muscles become stronger. But, if pain is more than mild and continues for more than 15 to 20 minutes, discontinue exercising and speak to your doctor.

General Information

Wear comfortable, loose clothes. Do the exercises on a hard surface covered with a thin mat or heavy blanket. If it makes you more comfortable, you may put a small pillow under your neck. Always do the exercises in the order marked by your doctor. (Please note: Consult your doctor before doing these or any other exercises.)

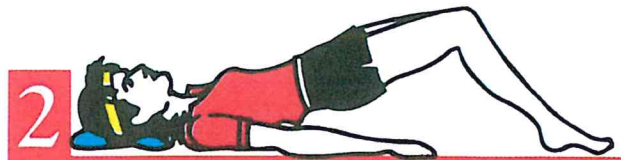
Instructions: _____

Doctor: _____ Date: _____

Exercises for acute stage



Lie flat on the floor in relaxed position, bring right knee toward chest, clasp hands around the knee. Pull right knee toward chest firmly and, at same time, straighten left leg. Hold 3 to 5 seconds. Do 5 times. Repeat with opposite leg. Repeat 5 times or as recommended.



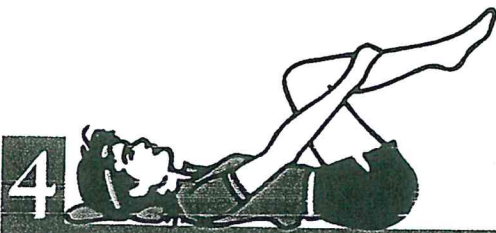
Lie on floor with knees bent, feet flat on floor, arms at sides, palms down. Tighten muscles of lower abdomen and buttocks so as to flatten the lower back. Slowly raise lower back and buttocks and hold 5 seconds. Relax. Do 5 times or as recommended.



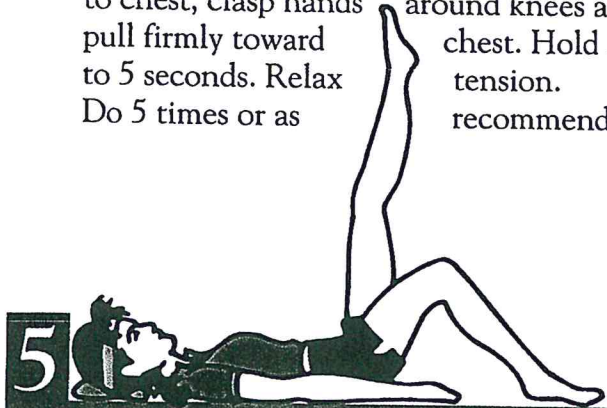
Lie on back with knees bent, feet flat on floor, hands at sides, palms down. Tighten muscles of the abdomen and buttocks so as to push the lower back flat against the floor. Hold 3 to 5 seconds. Relax. Do 5 times or as recommended.

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Exercises for Sub-acute/recovery stage



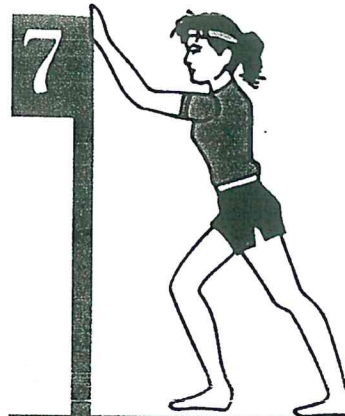
4 Lie on floor with knees bent, feet on the floor and arms at sides. Bring both knees to chest, clasp hands around knees and pull firmly toward chest. Hold 3 to 5 seconds. Relax. Do 5 times or as recommended.



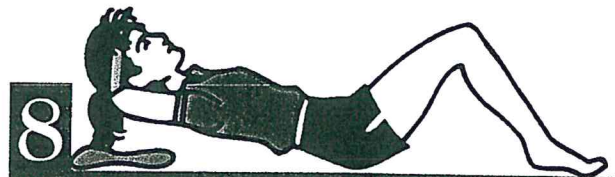
5 Lie on back, knees bent with feet flat on floor, arms at sides, palms down. Raise left leg up as far as comfortable without overstretching muscles behind the leg. Return left leg to starting position and repeat 5 times. Repeat exercise with right leg. Do 5 times or as recommended.



6 Lie flat on back, arms at sides, palms down. Slowly raise left leg, bringing raised leg toward the opposite side of the body until you feel the stretch. Repeat with right leg. Do 5 times or as recommended.



7 Stand with hands against wall, left leg approximately 18 inches behind right foot, keep heel flat on floor and left knee straight. Slowly bend forward until you feel the stretch behind the calf. Hold 3 to 5 seconds. Release tension and repeat 3 to 5 times. Repeat with opposite leg.



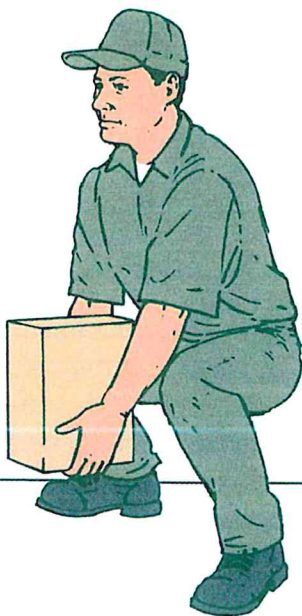
8 Lie flat on floor, hands clasped behind neck, knees bent, feet flat on floor. Tighten buttocks and at the same time lift head and shoulders 2 to 4 inches off floor, without pulling on neck. Hold 3 to 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times or as recommended.

Tips for Protecting Your Back

What's the best way to deal with low back pain? Do everything possible to avoid it! Chronic back pain can disrupt your life-style and impair your ability to work, so it's important to take steps to reduce or eliminate stress on your back. But even if you have already experienced some sign of low back pain, you can help stop it from getting worse. The following tips are easy to learn and remember—and easy to incorporate into your day-to-day activities. Yet they go a surprisingly long way toward protecting your back.

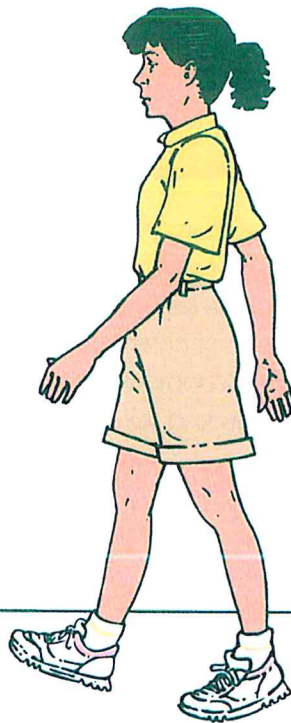
You are unique. So is your back. This information is not intended as a substitute for the personal care of your physician. Report any activity that causes back pain or tingling, numbness, or weakness in your legs.

❑ Bending and Lifting



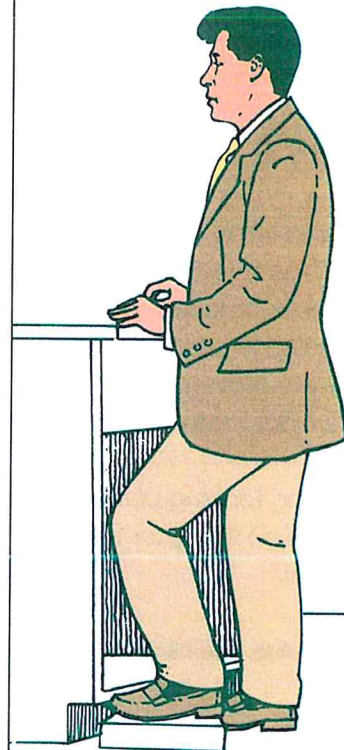
Bend at your knees rather than at your waist. When lifting and carrying an object, hold it close to your body—no higher than chest level. Don't twist while lifting. Push rather than pull when moving heavy objects such as furniture, and remember to bend at the knees.

❑ Walking



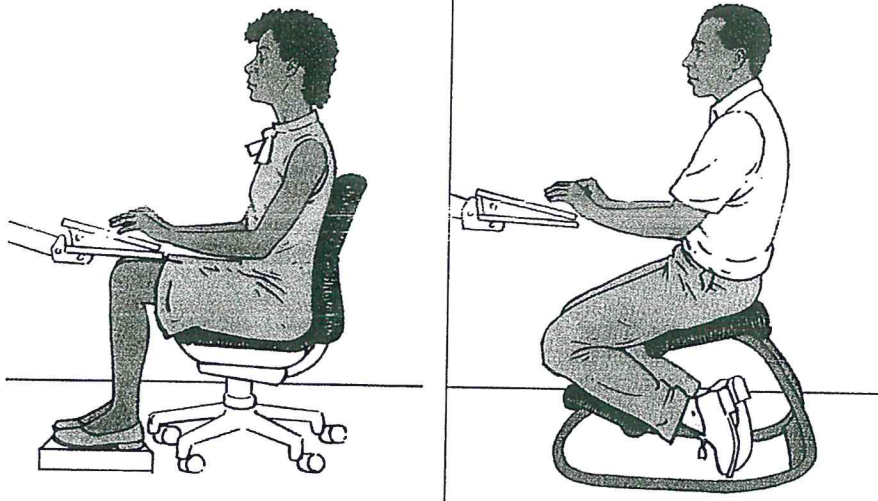
Walk with good posture—head high, chin tucked in, toes straight ahead—and wear comfortable shoes. Use your natural stride, and swing your arms naturally at your side.

❑ Standing



Stand with one foot forward and knees slightly bent while maintaining good posture. When standing for a long period of time, try to elevate one foot by using a low stool or other prop. Change your position frequently.

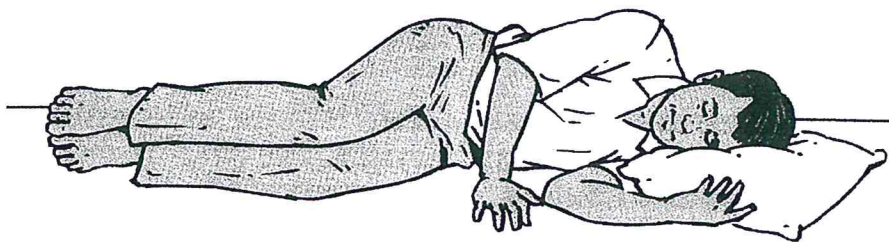
Sitting



While seated firmly against the back of a chair, have your knees higher than your hips by adjusting the seat or using a stool to prop up your feet. At a desk or table, pull your chair in as close as possible to avoid bending forward. There are several types of chairs designed specifically to prevent back pain, such as the Scandinavian-style chair-stool which places the weight on the lower legs and takes pressure off the back.

Avoid sitting for long periods of time. When driving, move the car seat forward so that your knees are bent, and drive with both hands on the wheel.

Sleeping



On your side, sleep with both knees and your lower body slightly bent. On your back, place a pillow under your knees. If you must sleep on your stomach, sleep with a pillow under your waist rather than under your head. Sleep on a semi-rigid mattress.

Turning and Reaching



Turn by moving your feet rather than by twisting at the waist. At the office, place your telephone and other frequently used objects where you will not have to twist your body to reach them. Use a stool to reach objects overhead.

Notes