

A person is shown from the side, sitting on a light-colored surface and leaning forward. Their hands are clasped together and resting on their feet, which are positioned far apart. This is a common stretch for the lower back. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting.

THE
LOW BACK

**STRETCH &
EXERCISE**

PATIENT HANDBOOK

THE LOW BACK STRETCH & EXERCISE PATIENT HANDBOOK

The exercises in this booklet are to be performed with appropriate instruction and monitoring from a qualified Health Professional. This Guidebook is meant to help in performing home exercises but is not meant to replace the necessary instruction needed to ensure these exercises are being performed properly. Some of these exercises may not be appropriate for you depending on your specific low back condition. If pain or discomfort should arise from performing any of these exercises, discontinue and consult your health care professional.

The home exercise program that has been recommended for you is a very important part of your care. Proper application of home exercises can make a considerable difference to the restoration and maintenance of a healthy low back. Make sure you find the time to perform the exercises that have been provided for you.

Perform the Low Back stretches that have been marked with at check

Flexion Stretches

- One Leg Pull-In
- Two Leg Pull-In
- Seated Flexion

Rotation Stretches

- One Leg Crossover
- Seated Rotation

Extension Stretches

- Elbow Raises
- Straight Arm Raises

- Lateral Flexion Stretch
- Hamstring Stretch

Stretching should be done with slow and smooth motions

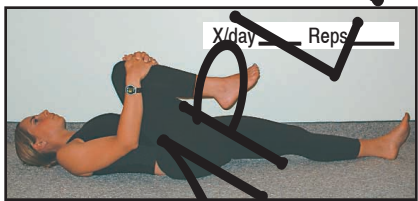
Stretching should not be painful

It is recommended that you warm your muscles up with light exercise before beginning your stretches.



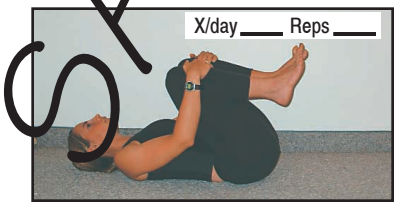
ONE LEG PULL-IN

Lie Flat on the floor face up. Slowly bring one knee towards your chest and grasp it with your hands. Pull it close to your chest. Hold for 10 sec. then relax. Repeat with your other knee.



TWO LEG PULL-IN

As above bringing both legs into your chest.



Caution: If these exercises cause discomfort, discontinue and consult a health professional.



SEATED FLEXION

Sitting on a chair slowly bend your body forward putting your head between your knees and bringing your hands down to the floor. Hold this for 10 sec. then relax.

Y/day _____ Rep _____

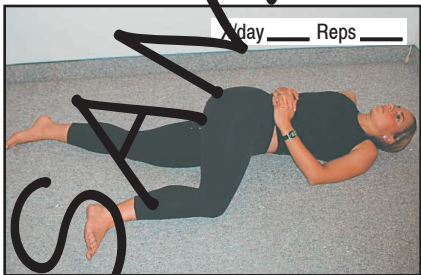


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ONE-LEG CROSSOVER

Lie on the ground facing up. Slowly bring your left knee up and then gently bring it across your body. Hold this for 10 sec. then relax. Repeat with the opposite leg.

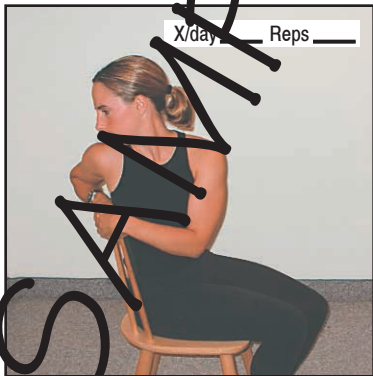


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SEATED ROTATION

Sitting on a chair turn to your right using the back of your chair for support. Hold for 10 sec. then relax. Do the same thing turning to the left.



X/day _____ Reps _____

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ELBOW RAISES

Lying face down slowly and gently extend your low back as you come up onto your elbows. Hold for 10 sec. then relax.



STRAIGHT-ARM RAISES

Lying face down slowly and gently extend your back until your arms are straightened. Hold for 10 sec. then relax.

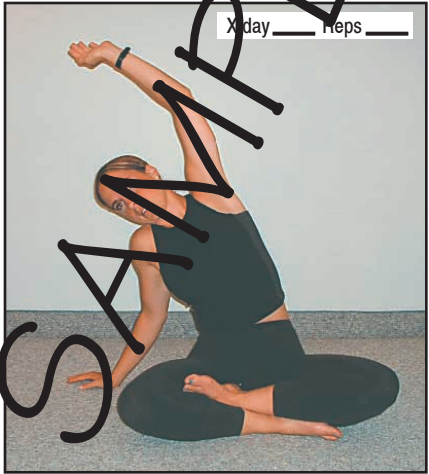


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LATERAL FLEXION

Seated on the floor, place your right hand down on the mat beside you for stability. Slowly lean over to the right as you reach your left hand over your head. Hold for 10 sec. then relax. Do the same on the opposite side.

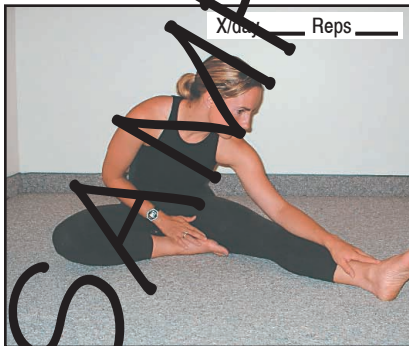


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HAMSTRING

Sitting on the floor stretch one leg out in front of you. Straighten your leg so that the knee is not bent. Slowly bring your chest down towards your knee until you feel a light stretch in the back of your leg. Hold for 10 sec. then relax. Do the same with the other leg.



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Perform the strengthening exercises that have been marked by a check

Extension Strengthening

- One Leg Extension
- Trunk Extension
- Kneeling Leg Extension
- Cross Crawl

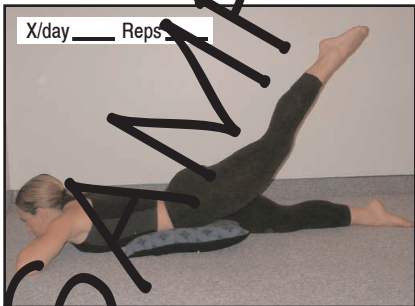
Abdominal Strengthening

- Crunches
- Twisting Crunches



ONE-LEG EXTENSION

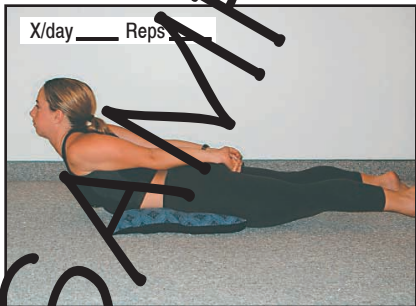
Lie face down on a mat with a pillow under your lower abdomen. Lift your left leg up off the floor and hold for 3 sec. and then relax. Repeat with your opposite leg.



Caution: If these exercises cause discomfort, discontinue and consult a health professional.

TRUNK EXTENSION

Lie face down on a mat with a pillow under your lower abdomen. Place your hands behind your back and extend your head and shoulders backwards as you lift your chest up off the mat. Hold for 3 sec. and then relax.

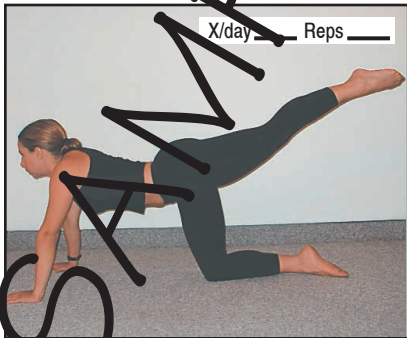


Caution: If these exercises cause discomfort, discontinue and consult a health professional.



KNEELING LEG EXTENSION

Kneeling on a mat on the floor, slowly extend your right leg out behind you. Hold for 3 seconds then relax. Repeat with your left leg.

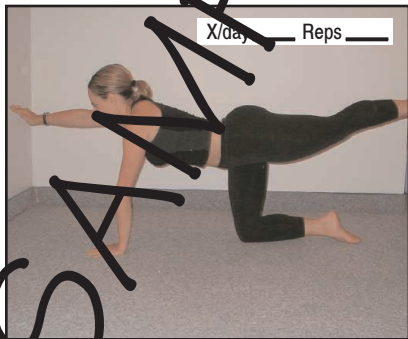


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CROSS CRAWL

Kneel down on a mat. Slowly extend your right leg back as you stretch your left arm forward. Hold for 3 sec. then relax. Repeat with your opposite arm and leg.

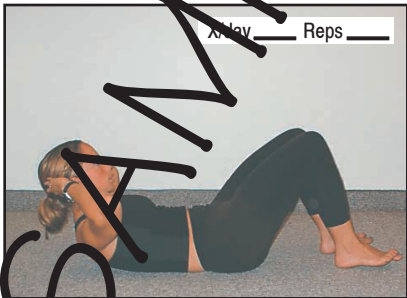


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CRUNCHES

Lie on a mat on your back with your knees bent and your hands gently behind your head. Slowly bring your shoulders straight up off the mat as you tighten your stomach muscles. Your head should rest gently on your hands and should not be pulled forward. Hold for 3 sec. then relax.

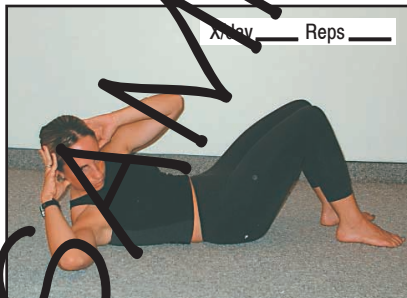


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TWISTING CRUNCHES

With twisting crunches after you bring your shoulders off the mat slowly twist the left shoulder towards the opposite knee. Hold for 3 sec. then relax. Repeat twisting the other way.



Caution: If these exercises cause discomfort, discontinue and consult a health professional.

POSTURE TIPS

The ears should be directly above your shoulders. The head weighs approximately 8 pounds. When positioned directly over the shoulders this weight is balanced and causes minimal stress on the spine. If your head is forward it can put excessive stress on the joints in the lower neck which over long periods of time can lead to degenerative changes. The lower neck is where the nerves that feed the arms exit the spine. Degenerative changes in this region can therefore cause serious arm problems.

The shoulders should be back. Slouching draws the head forward and leads to increased stress on the lower neck.

The hips should be over top of the ankles. Some people sway the abdomen forward. This leads to an increased curve in the low back which can increase the stress on certain low back joints. The low back is naturally the area of highest stress in the spine and most prone to problems. Poor posture increases the stress on this already vulnerable area. The low back is also the region where the nerves that feed the legs exit the spine. Low back degeneration can therefore lead to serious leg problems.

Keeping good posture can make a considerable difference to the long term health of your spine. Once degenerative changes have taken place it is very difficult and often impossible to restore the spine back to full health. Always make an effort to maintain good posture.

PROPER POSTURE

