

Acute Pain Stage

NOTE

If back pain becomes worse when you bend backwards, these exercise positions are more likely to help. They are designed to move your body in positions which are not painful. If you experience pain, discontinue exercise and consult your doctor.

Knee to Chest

1 Lie flat on the floor in a relaxed position. Your left knee should be in a bent position with foot on floor. Bring your right knee toward your chest, clasping your hands behind the knee. Pull your right knee toward your chest firmly and hold for ten or twenty seconds and slowly relax. Repeat the same procedure with the opposite leg. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



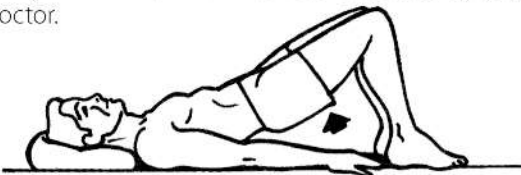
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Bridging

2a To start the bridging exercise, lie on the floor with back flat, knees bent and feet flat on floor. Place a pillow under your head to prevent neck from arching back.



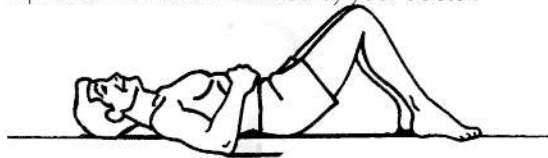
2b Tighten the muscles of your lower abdomen and buttocks so as to flatten your low back. Slowly raise low back and buttocks from the floor and hold for ten to thirty seconds. Slowly relax. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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Pelvic Tilt

3 This is an important exercise in that it reduces stress on the lower back, especially when you are sitting or standing. You should lie on your back, knees bent, head comfortable with a pillow. You may notice a space between your lower back and the surface of the floor. Squeeze your buttocks together, tighten abdominal muscles, and tilt or tuck your buttocks until the small of your back is pressing flat against the surface of the floor. Hold for ten to twenty seconds and slowly relax. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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NOTE

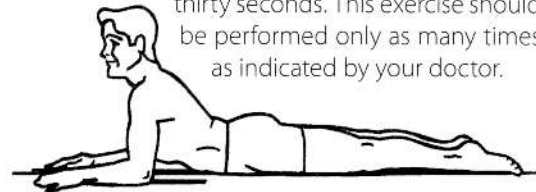
Extension exercises are usually more helpful if back pain is worse when you sit or bend forward. Many people find their pain is relieved by performing extension exercises. Oftentimes exercise programs are trial and error until you find the correct combination.

Extension Lying Prone

4a Lie face down in a resting position. Relax and take a few deep breaths to release the tension in the lower back. Hold this position a few seconds until comfortable.



4b Slide your forearms forward until your elbows are perpendicular to the floor. Then slowly raise your upper body as far as you can without increasing your pain. Hold this position for at least thirty seconds. This exercise should be performed only as many times as indicated by your doctor.



NOTE: This exercise is designed to stretch abdomen and hip flexors.

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Subacute/Recovery Stage

These exercises are to be performed in addition to those suggested during the acute stage of your condition.

Double Knee to Chest

5 Lie on the floor with your knees bent, feet on the floor and arms at your sides. Bring both knees to chest, clasping hands around the knees and pulling firmly towards your chest. Hold for three to five seconds. Slowly relax. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.

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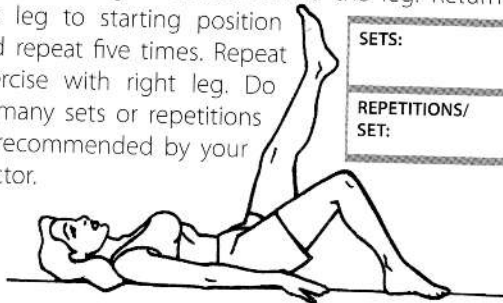


NOTE Be certain to contract the abdominal muscles while keeping the lower back in contact with the floor. This exercise will help the muscles behind your thighs to be more flexible.

Hamstring Stretch

6 Lie on your back, your knees bent with feet flat on floor, arms at your sides, palms down. Raise your leg up as far as is comfortable without over-stretching muscles behind the leg. Return left leg to starting position and repeat five times. Repeat exercise with right leg. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.

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NOTE Never stretch to the point of pain. If any exercise causes pain in your buttocks; pain, tingling or numbness in your legs, do not continue the exercise.

Hip Rotator Exercise

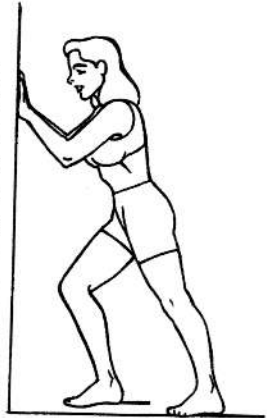
7 Lie flat on your back, arms at your sides, palms down. Slowly raise one leg, bringing the raised leg toward the opposite side of the body until you feel the stretch. Return to neutral position. Repeat with opposite leg. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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Calf Stretch

8 Standing with hands against wall, left foot approximately eighteen inches behind right foot, keeping heel flat on the floor and left knee straight, slowly bend forward until you feel the stretch behind the calf. Hold for three to five seconds, release the tension and repeat three to five times. Repeat with the opposite leg. This exercise is designed to release tension behind calf



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Abdominal Toning Exercise

9 Lie with knees bent. Arms extended. Raise your head and shoulders from the floor until your hands touch your knees. Hold for three seconds, slowly uncurl and relax. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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Abdominal Toning Exercise

10 Lie on your back with your hands against your thighs. Place a pillow under the small of your back to take up the space. Raise your legs so that your thighs will be perpendicular to the floor. It may be more comfortable to place an ottoman under your knees when doing this exercise. Push against your thighs with your hands while at the same time resisting with your thighs. Do this for ten to thirty seconds. Slowly relax. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



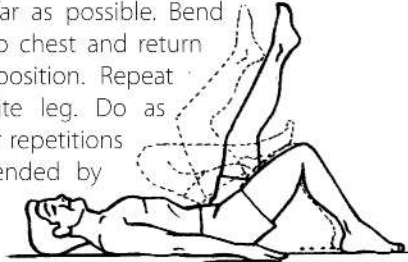
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Chronic/Rehabilitative Stage

Before you begin any exercise program, be certain that you begin by trying the movements slowly and carefully. Allow the muscles to loosen up. Mild heat or a hot tub soak for five to ten minutes prior to beginning the exercises may help to relax tight muscles.

Hamstring Stretch

11 Lie on your back, with both knees bent, feet flat on the floor. Bring one knee to the chest, then straighten it to the vertical position, pointing the toe upward as far as possible. Bend knee back to chest and return to original position. Repeat with opposite leg. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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Abdominal Toning Exercise

14 Lie on back, knees bent, feet flat on floor, do not put hands behind head. It may be helpful to have someone hold your feet for support. Sit up to one quarter of a sitting position and hold for three to five seconds. Slowly relax. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



SETS:
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Hamstring Stretch Sitting

12 Sit sideways on couch, stretch out right leg flat and put left foot on floor. Put left hand on left knee and reach forward with your right hand for the toes of the right foot. Reach as far forward as you can without discomfort. Feel the stretch behind the right leg, hold for three to five seconds and lean back to release the tension. Repeat with same leg five times, then change position and repeat with opposite leg.



Prone Extension Exercise

15 Lie face down on floor with large pillow under the hips and lower part of the abdomen. Lift one leg from the floor keeping the leg straight, hold for three to five seconds and slowly relax. Repeat using the other leg. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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Be certain to maintain the lumbar curve when doing this exercise. Bend at the waist, not at the neck and shoulders.

Side Stretching

13 Standing with hands on hips, bend slowly to one side, bending only at the waist. Do not flex hip or knee. Hold for three to five seconds. Return to neutral position and repeat to opposite side. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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Back Extension

16 Lie face down on the floor with a pillow under your hips and the lower part of your abdomen. Place your hands behind your hips and lift your head and shoulders from the floor. You must be cautious not to raise your body high enough to cause pain in your lower back. Hold for three to five seconds, slowly relax and resume resting position. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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Chronic/Rehabilitative Stage

Side Lying Leg Lifts

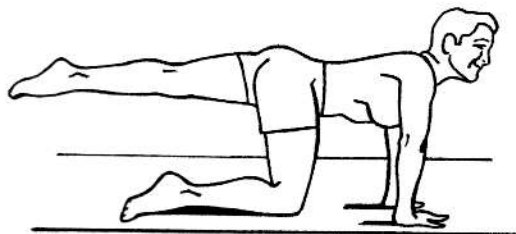
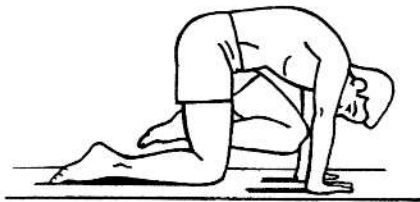
17 Lie on right side, raise left leg to as nearly a vertical position as possible, repeat five times. Lie on left side and repeat the exercise raising right leg. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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Back Strength Training

18 On hands and knees, draw one knee toward chest, flexing trunk and neck at same time. Then swing leg back to the outstretched position, extending neck and back at the same time. Do not extend the raised leg higher than level with floor. Repeat with the other leg. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



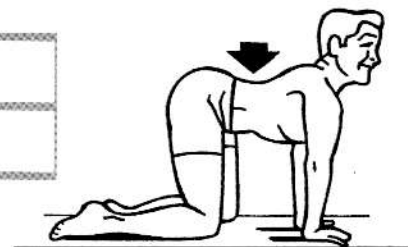
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Cat Curl Exercise

19 Assume a kneeling position, resting on your hands and knees. Arch your back like a cat, drop your head at the same time. Then, as illustrated reverse the arch by bringing up your head and forming a "U" with your spine. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



SETS:
REPETITIONS/ SET:



Oblique Abdominal Curl

20 Lie on back, knees bent, feet flat on the floor, hands behind the neck. Begin to rotate your torso from flat position with your right elbow reaching to the left side as illustrated. Hold for three to five seconds and then slowly relax. Turn in the opposite direction and repeat the exercise. Slowly relax back to the neutral position. Do as many sets or repetitions as recommended by your doctor.



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