

Exercises only work if you do them!

Some people find that they must repeat the exercises many times a day. Others find they can do a longer session a few times a week. You should do what your body needs.

Some people need to keep doing the exercises every day – just like brushing their teeth every day.



Exercising can be hard work for the body and the muscles. You may feel slightly sore and stiff. The exercises should not cause severe pain. They should get easier the more often you do them.

Other Exercises

There are many ways to exercise your back and body. Here are some other ideas

- **Sports** – Many sports are very good to keep you body and back fit. Choose one you enjoy and will keep going to *e.g.* swimming, cycling, gym, jogging on a bouncer/ trampet.
- **Walking** – is best at a good pace, in a good pair of shoes, without carrying any bags and on a slightly softer surface such as grass or sand.
- **Dancing** – such as ballroom, line dancing or even belly dancing! These can all be great – especially if you become good at them.
- **Classes** – Some classes can be very good for muscle control, balance and back problems
e.g. - Pilates, Tai Chi, Alexander Technique, Yoga (especially the slower styles like “Hatha” and “Ayengar”).

Compiled by the Patient Information Leaflet Group
Edinburgh Community Physiotherapy Service
NHS Lothian Primary & Community Division
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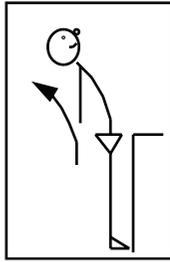
Back Exercises Leaflet



Only do the exercises your physiotherapist has marked for you.

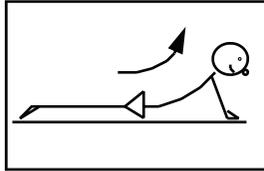
1. Low back extension

a) Stand facing a wall or table. Bend backwards. Don't let your hips or pelvis move forward to touch the table. Return to upright.



Repeat ____

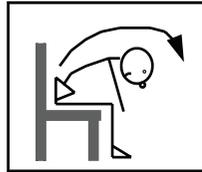
b) Lie—on front. Push up with your arms. Don't lift your hips or pelvis off the floor. Return to flat.



Repeat ____

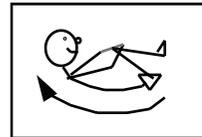
2. Low back flexion

a) Sit—legs apart. Bend forwards. Put your head between your knees. Return to upright.



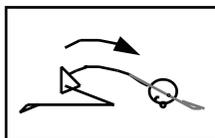
Repeat ____

b) Lie—on back. Lift knees to chest. Use your arms to hug them closer. Return to flat.



Repeat ____

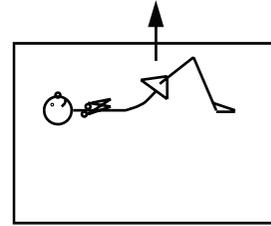
c) Kneel. Bend forwards and stretch your arms out in front. Keep your bottom on your feet.



Repeat ____

3. Bridging

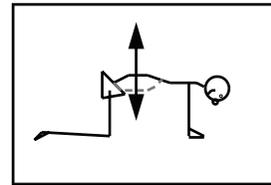
Lie—on back. Knees bent and feet on the floor. Relax. Gently, pull in your deep stomach muscles (see core stability leaflet). Tip your pelvis backwards so your low back touches the floor. Slowly lift your bottom off the floor. Each back bone lifts, in turn, off the floor. Hold for ____ seconds. Slowly lower back down. Touch each back bone down in order again.



Repeat ____

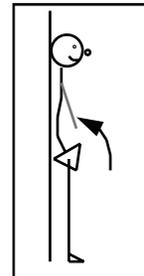
4. Pelvic tilting

a) Kneel on all fours. Tense your bottom and tuck in your bottom and pelvis. Arch your back like a cat. Then tip your pelvis the other way so your back hollows and sags down.



Repeat ____

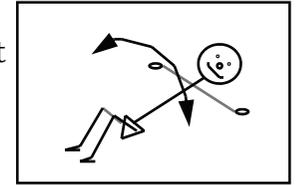
b) Stand—back to a wall. Pull your shoulders back. Flatten your low back to the wall. At first, you may need your knees slightly bent and feet 6-12 inches (15-30cm) from the wall.



Repeat ____

5. Rotation

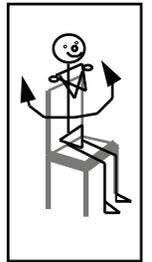
a) Lie—on back. Knees bent and feet on the floor. Relax. Move both knees over to the side. This twists the body. Return to the middle.



Right Left

Repeat ____

b) Sit up tall. Fold your arms in front of you at shoulder level. Turn to the side and return to the front. As you begin to warm up you may be able to go faster.

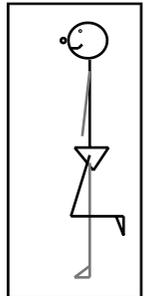


Right Left

Repeat ____

6. Balance

Stand up tall. Lift one leg off the ground. Try to keep up tall and balance for ____ seconds.



- don't hold your breath.
- relax your arms at your side.
- keep tall—don't lean to the side.
- don't let your legs touch together.
- try to keep steady without wobbling or using much effort.

Right Left