

MOBILITY

Home Exercises of Low Back



Before Home Exercises of Low Back

Should I first talk to my healthcare provider before doing lower back exercises?

Talk to your healthcare provider especially if you have any concerns or if you think it may be important to take specific precautions.

Can I do lower back exercises even if I have persistent pain?

In general, you can start lower back exercises even if you have persistent pain. In fact, exercise can decrease lower back pain and improve movement and walking.

When should I take my pain medication if I am doing lower back exercises?

If you normally take pain medications, take them about 30 minutes before you exercise. As exercise helps you feel better, you may be able to decrease the pain medications.

If I wear a corset or a brace, should I wear it when I do lower back exercises?

You can wear your corset or brace initially.



LET'S BEGIN

What lower back exercises should I start with?

Start with range of motion exercises and some strengthening exercises with minimal movement.

What are some specific range of motion exercises I can do?

Start with **trunk rotations**. While on your back and with your feet on the ground and your legs bent, rotate (twist) the knees down to the floor. You can start with these rotations in either direction. To help with range of motion of your back, you can also stretch your **hamstrings and quadriceps**. One way to stretch the quadriceps is to lie down on your side and bend the knee of the top leg. You can **stretch your hamstring by sitting in a chair**, propping one leg onto another chair, and gradually trying to straighten the knee.

What are some specific strengthening exercises with minimal movement that I can try?

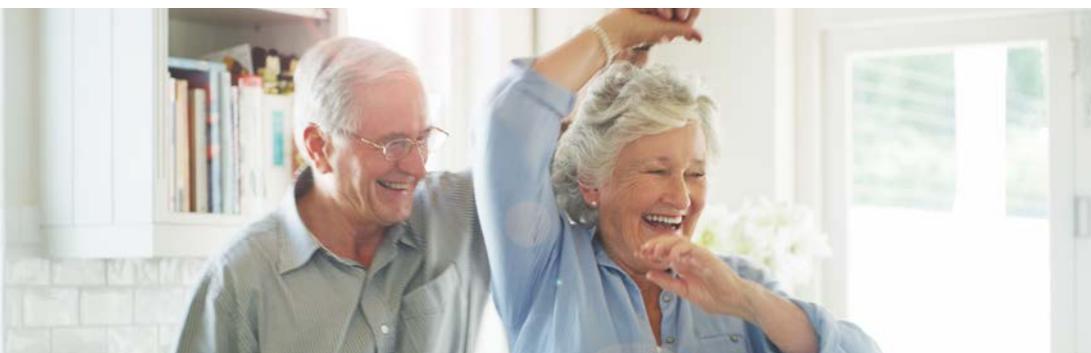
You can try to do **supine pelvic tilts**: lie down flat on your back and arch your lower back as you tilt your pelvis and then release. You can also do a **gluteal squeeze while sitting down**. (See next page for exercises).

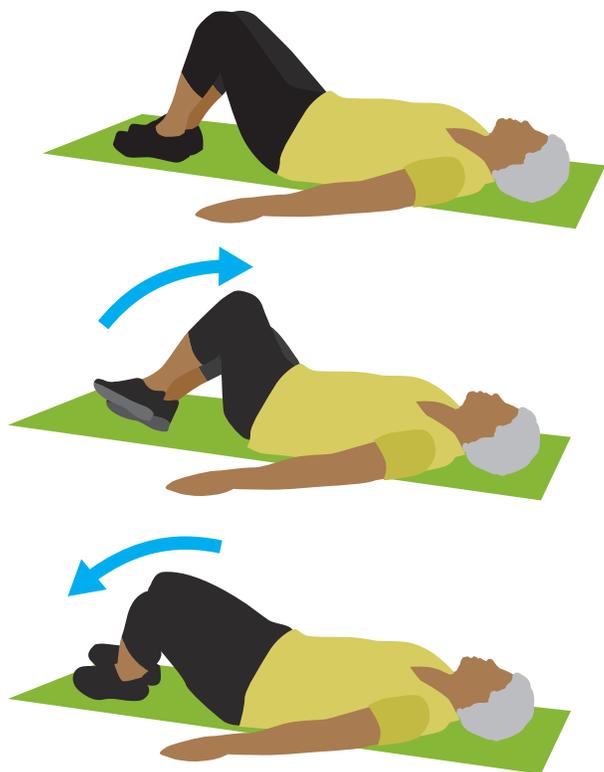
How many times should I do these exercises?

Repeat each exercise a few times in each session. Aim for a few sessions every day.

Should I do these lower back exercises the same every time?

As you stretch your hamstrings and quadriceps, you can also increase the repetition of supine pelvic tilts and gluteal squeezes as you feel more comfortable, gradually increase the range of your stretches.





TRUNK ROTATION



SIDELYING QUAD(RICEPS) STRETCHING



SUPINE PELVIC TILT



**SEATED CHAIR
HAMSTRING STRETCHING**



**SIT AND SQUEEZE, PELVIC
FLOOR EXERCISE**

WHAT'S NEXT?

What exercises should I do next?

Next, try some exercises to build strength. First, try **straight leg raises**. Lie down on your back, stomach, or side and try to raise up one leg at a time and then set it down.

If I become comfortable with straight leg raises, what should I try then?

For these next exercises, make sure your therapist and caregiver are around as you learn them and get comfortable.

You can try an **abdominal curl**. While on your back and with your feet on the ground and your legs bent move your head and neck toward your abdomen. Be sure to support your head with your hands.

Finally, and be especially cautious with these, you can try the **bridge and the plank** and exercise using a medicine ball. You can try to sit on a medicine ball initially and twist your torso once you feel steady on a medicine ball.

To do the **bridge exercise**, lie down on your back and with your feet on the ground and your legs bent, lift your lower back up while your shoulders and head remain on the ground. Then gently release.

To do a **plank**, lie down on your stomach and try to lift your body up so that it is supported by your forearms and your curled toes. If you can, hold this position.

Sciatic nerve gliding exercise can be done with therapist initially. While on you back, hold behind the knee to raise the leg. Slowly straighten the knee and hold for 10 seconds. Gradually increase holding and repetition. **(See next page for exercises).**

How many times should I do these exercises?

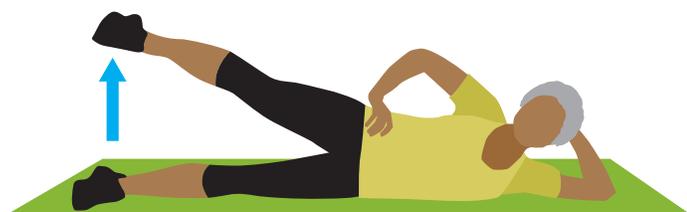
Repeat each exercise a few times in each session. Aim for a 2-4 sessions every day.



STRAIGHT LEG RAISE (TO THE FRONT)



PLANK EXERCISE



STRAIGHT LEG RAISE (TO THE OUTSIDE/SIDE)



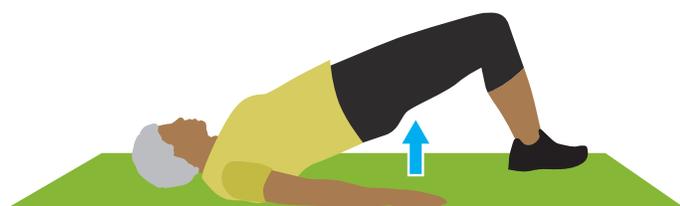
PRONE STRAIGHT LEG RAISE



SCIATIC NERVE GLIDING EXERCISE WITH HAMSTRING STRETCHING



ABDOMINAL (AB) CURL (UP)



BRIDGE EXERCISE



SEATED TWIST ON (MEDICINE) BALL

WRAP-UP

Can I take a break during these exercises?

It is a good idea to take a break for 1-2 minutes between each exercise. When you are just starting out, this break might be a little longer.

How do I continue to improve over time?

You can increase the number of times you do each exercise or the resistance you use every 3-4 days.

Will I experience pain while I am doing these lower back exercises?

Mild discomfort and mild worsening of pain is normal during exercise and may last for 1-2 days.

What should I do after I am done with these exercises?

You can use a hot pack or a cold pack, as needed, on your back for a few minutes after exercise or even between exercises. Do not lie with the hot pack or cold pack under your back. You can also drink fluids in small amounts (6-oz; 180-ml) and frequently (6 times), especially if it is hot.

Can I do other forms of physical activity in addition to these lower back exercises?

Yes. You can do other exercises, including walking or other upper body exercises.



MOBILITY

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TIP
SHEET

CAUTIONS

When should I stop these lower back exercises and call my health care provider?

Discontinue these exercises and call your health care provider if (1) the pain you feel after exercise doesn't get better after 1-2 days, (2) there is new pain, pain in a different location, or pain that is significantly worse, (3) you experience swelling, (4) you have weakness or difficulty moving your legs, or (4) you fall and get hurt or experience repeated falls.

