

## **BACK EXERCISES SET I**

This set of exercises will start rehabilitating your back muscles. Please do these DAILY for the next 6 weeks. When you start, recognize your limitations and gradually work on building both repetitions and duration. Don't be discouraged. The changes in your spine will take time to heal. Initially these exercises may be uncomfortable, but persistence will pay off. Remember, **CONSISTENCY** is more important than intensity.

**IMPORTANT:** Consult your physician before starting these exercises.

1.



2.



### **Lumbar Stretches**

1. Prop your feet on a sturdy chair and place a small pillow under your tailbone. Hips and knees should be at a 90° angle. Hold for 15 minutes.
2. Use a door frame or partner to hold your leg. Stretch for 15-30 seconds. Repeat on opposite side.

3.



4.



### **Hip Stretches**

3. Cross the ankle to knee and use your hand to press the knee toward the floor. Hold for 15-30 seconds. Repeat on opposite side.
4. Cross the right leg over the left. Use your left arm to rotate your torso in the opposite direction. Hold 15-30 seconds. Repeat on opposite side.

5.



6.



### **Abdominal Strengthening**

5. Lay with your knees bent and arms by your side.
6. Then, lift your knees toward your chest. You may use your arms for assistance at first. Gradually work toward lifting your legs without your arms. Repeat 10 times.

7.



8.



### **Lumbar Strengthening**

7. Lay with your knees bent and fingers interlaced behind your head.
8. Then, squeeze your low back muscles to arch your stomach toward the ceiling. Hold for 5 seconds and progressively increase the duration of hold. Repeat 10 times.

## **BACK EXERCISES SET II**

Once comfortable with "Back Exercises Set I", start this set of exercises to continue strengthening your back and core muscles. Please do these DAILY and recognize your limitations as you gradually work on building both repetitions and duration. Don't be discouraged. The changes in your spine will take time to heal. Initially these exercises may be uncomfortable, but persistence will pay off. Remember, CONSISTENCY is more important than intensity.

**IMPORTANT:** Consult your physician before starting these exercises.



### **Warm-up Stretches**

1. While sitting on a firm surface, bend at the waist. Stretch the low back muscles. Do not bounce. Hold for 15-30 seconds.
2. While sitting with your knees bent, drop your knees out to the sides and lean forward. Use your elbows to guide your knees down if necessary. Do not bounce. Hold for 15-30 seconds.

### **Abdominal Strengthening**

3. Lay with your knees bent and arms by your side.
4. Then, lift your knees toward your chest. You may use your arms for assistance at first. Gradually work toward lifting your legs without your arms. Repeat 10 times.

### **Crunch & Extend**

5. Use your hands to support your neck. Lift the shoulders off the ground and hold for 2 seconds. Begin with 5 repetitions and progressively increase the number of repetitions.
6. Then, lay flat on your belly. Extend your upper body only, using your hands to assist, keeping your hands directly under the shoulders. Hold for 10 seconds.

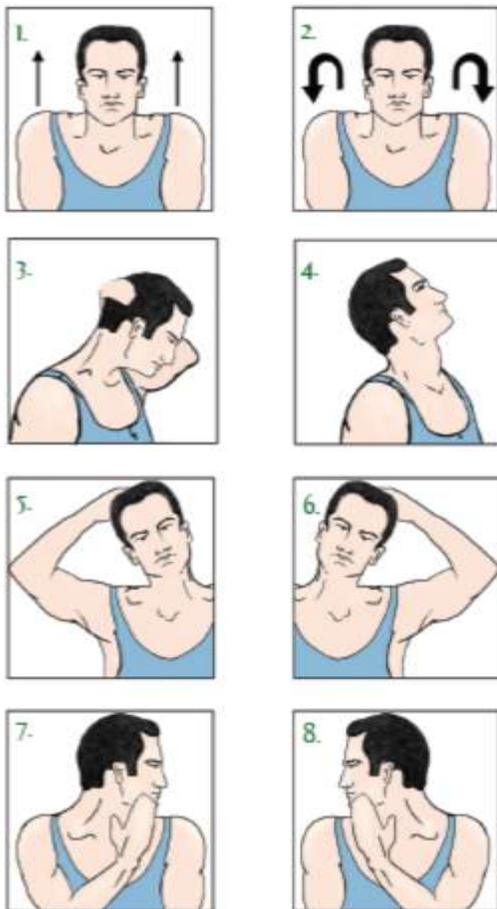
### **Ground Swim**

7. Begin with your hands and knees on the ground. Extend the left arm out by the ear. If possible, extend the left leg behind you. Hold for 5 seconds.
8. Switch sides and repeat 5 times each side.

## NECK EXERCISES

This set of exercises is intended to reduce your neck pain. Please do these DAILY for the next 6 weeks and work up to twice daily. When you start, recognize your limitations and gradually work on building both repetitions and duration. Don't be discouraged. The changes in your neck will take time to heal. Initially these exercises may be uncomfortable, but persistence will pay off. Remember, **CONSISTENCY** is more important than intensity.

**IMPORTANT:** Consult your physician before starting these exercises.



### Shoulder Lift

1. Shrug shoulders & hold for 10 seconds. Continue to increase the duration of hold every 2-3 days by 5 seconds.
2. Rotate shoulders clockwise 10 times. Then, rotate shoulders counterclockwise 10 times.

### Neck Flexion/Extension

3. Flex neck forward slowly; use the hand to assist. Focus on both sides of neck. Hold for  $\geq 30$  seconds.
4. Extend neck back; focus on both sides of neck. Hold for  $\geq 30$  seconds.

### Neck Tilt

5. Tilt head to the left. Use the hand to assist. Hold for  $\geq 30$  seconds.
6. Tilt head to the right. Use the hand to assist. Hold for  $\geq 30$  seconds.

### Neck Rotation

7. Rotate head to the left. Use the hand to assist. Hold for  $\geq 30$  seconds. Focus on the area that pain originates from.
8. Rotate head to the right. Use the hand to assist. Hold for  $\geq 30$  seconds. Focus on the area that pain originates from.