



## EXERCISES FOR LOW BACK PAIN

You can try a few of these simple exercises to help ease low back pain. We advise that you consult with your Physiotherapist before commencing them.

### Knee rolls



Lie on your back with your knees bent up and feet flat. Keep your knees together and roll them steadily from side to side. Go as far as you can within your comfort zone.

Often you will not be able to allow a large movement initially as it may be uncomfortable, so keep a smooth and gentle motion going. It may become easier after a few repetitions.

### Leg flexion



Lie on your back with your legs straight out. Bend one leg up, pulling your knee up towards your chest with your hands. Try and keep the other leg relaxed. Hold the position for a few seconds at the top of the movement. Lower your leg back down and repeat on the other side.

### Extension in lying



Lie on your front. Get up so you are resting on your forearms, as if you are lying on the beach and looking out to sea, then lie down again.

If you find this difficult you might need to start by just lying on your front for a short period of time for your back to get used to being in extension of some degree.

Your back and hips should be relaxed as you let them go and remain where they want. The only work you are doing is supporting your upper body weight with your arms and shoulders.

### Standing side flexion



Stand with your hands against the sides of your thighs. Slide one hand down the same thigh, bending to that side and avoiding any twisting. Come back up and repeat on the other side. Allow the range to increase slowly as you do it.

## Back arching



Stand with your palms against your buttocks, as if you are holding on to them. Move your hips forward, and then lean back as far as you easily can. This can feel a bit tricky to start with but go easily and you will find it easier with time. This can be a very useful movement to do if you have a disc related problem and can't lie down to do the extension in lying exercise.

## Pelvic tilting



Lie on your back with your knees bent up and feet flat. Start by tilting your pelvis a little so your back arches a bit. Now press the small of your back down to the surface and tuck your bottom under. Do not lift your buttocks up. This is a forward and back rocking motion and often tricky to get right. You should feel the small of your back has pushed down against the surface. If put your hand under your back when you arch slightly you will feel the pressure as you tilt correctly in the opposite direction.

## Hip Bridge



Lie on your back with your feet flat and hip-width apart, arms relaxed, and knees bent. Squeeze your buttocks as you lift your hips, creating a straight line from the knees to the shoulders. Hold for a slow count of two, and then lower slowly. Build up to 10 to 12 repetitions.

This move helps to stretch the hip flexors and strengthen the muscles that stabilise the spine, including those of the lower back, the gluteals, and the large, stabilising abdominal muscles.

Make it harder: When you get to the top of the movement lift one foot off the floor and hold it straight up toward the ceiling, keeping the hips even. This is much more challenging, so start by holding this pose for just a few seconds. Repeat 5 to 8 times, and then switch legs.

General exercise such as swimming or walking can be beneficial when dealing with low back pain. Once it is settling down it is worth considering a course of Pilates to help strengthen the core muscles, or Yoga to help improve flexibility.

