

BEST EXERCISES AND STRETCHES FOR LOWER BACK PAIN

I'm sharing these to help YOU make some smart decisions about how you can get rid of your own pain.



I've researched, tested and compiled some of the most effective exercises, stretches, treatments and techniques for lower back pain.

While the last thing you might feel like doing when you have back pain is work out, the number one most prescribed (and most effective) lower back pain treatment is stretching and exercise.



Exercising helps to reduce weakness, get rid of stiffness, minimize how often back pain will recur and reduces the severity and duration of possible future episodes of back pain.

CONSISTENCY IS THE KEY

If you're hoping for miracle cures, I don't have any to share. The key to relief using any of these treatments is to stick with it over time. While some of these treatments do offer immediate help in alleviating pain, anyone who promises an instant cure is lying.

IF YOU FEEL PAIN, STOP IT

Don't mess with your lower back. If you start feeling more pain or you're simply unsure about one of these treatments, ask a pro.



Got all that? Good! Let's hop into talking about the stuff that helps make lower back pain easier to manage – or gets rid of it entirely.

5 GREAT STRETCHES FOR LOWER BACK PAIN:

1. SPHINX (LUMBAR EXTENSION)

Make sure your elbows are directly under your shoulders.



Lie flat on your stomach, propping yourself up with your forearms.

Gently but firmly press through the palms of your hands and the tops of your feet while pressing your pubic bone forward.

2. HAMSTRING FLOOR STRETCH

Start by lying on your back, with your hips level and your lower back on the floor. Then, keeping one leg extended, bend the other one toward your chest.



Slowly extend your raised knee, lifting the sole of your foot toward the ceiling.

Use your hands to gently pull your leg towards you, to the point of "mild discomfort".

3. KNEE TO CHEST



Lie on your back with both legs extended on the floor. Then, keeping one leg extended, bring a knee up into your chest and hold for 15 – 30 seconds. You can use your hands to help pull the leg closer to your chest, if it's comfortable. You should feel this in your lower back and buttocks.



4. BRIDGE

Lie on your back, with knees bent and your feet placed a hip distance apart.



Then, take a deep breath, and as you let it out, lift your hips up off of the floor until your knees, shoulders and hips are in a straight line.



Breathe in and lower your hips back to the floor. Repeat this 8 – 12 times.

5. KNEE ROLLS/SPINE STRETCH

Lie on your back with a slight cushion under your head.



Stretch your arms out to the sides, and place your legs in front of you, with your knees bent and together.



With your upper body relaxed, breathe deeply, and as you breathe, roll both of your knees to one side, followed by your pelvis, while keeping your upper body and shoulders flat on the ground.

Breathe deeply and hold for 20 seconds and repeat this with the other knee. Repeat 6 – 8 times.

4 LOW-IMPACT AEROBIC EXERCISES:

1. WALKING



Easy on your back but great for every part of you, walking a few miles 2 – 3 times per week on a treadmill or outdoors is an easy way to stay active and help your lower back at the same time.

For an even better level of exercise (with even less impact), consider a stair machine or elliptical trainer.



These will add some resistance to the movements (though you can control it) and will really get you sweating, in the best way possible!

2. ROWING

Called the "Best-Kept Secret at the Gym" by Weight Watchers, rowing can help strengthen your back muscles while using smooth, low-impact movements that are easy to handle.



A. Wrap fingers lightly around the handle and keep wrists straight.



B. Push through feet, extend legs, and lean back slightly; keep shoulders relaxed.

3. EXERCISE BIKES



Stationary exercise bikes are perfect for getting your heart rate up and improving blood flow while allowing you to remain seated,

4. SWIMMING/WATER THERAPY

Water-based exercise is a fantastic option for those in so much pain that normal aerobic exercise is too painful. The buoyancy of being in the water minimizes the stress on your back, while still giving you the chance to get in a great, back-strengthening workout.

