

## Exercise Prescription for Back Pain

Your physician may recommend that you consult with a physical therapist to help with your back pain. Many individuals question how exercise can alleviate symptoms when movement is typically the culprit for their problems.

Here are some common examples:

**FLEXIBILITY:** Improving general mobility of the trunk and spinal segments can reduce stress on the spine during even simple movements, such as getting out of bed in the morning. Hip mobility must also be emphasized because a stiff hip joint will transfer forces directly to the lower back during walking or activities that required prolonged standing.

**CORE STABILIZATION:** Lower back pain is often related to segments of the spine that move too much, termed hypermobile segments. This hypermobility may be due to disc degeneration, damage due to trauma, or even a compensation to make up for adjacent segments of the spine that may move too little. In order to alleviate these hypermobile and painful segments you must learn to stabilize them by activating your core musculature. These basic exercises can be performed while laying on your back in a comfortable position, and can often be executed during basic daily activities such as walking and lifting.

**POSTURAL EXERCISES:** A degenerative or damaged spine may not tolerate the normal wear and tear of daily activity. Even the best treatments and medications cannot take the place of simple ergonomics. Exercises and postural reminders mean to improve spinal alignment can help make it through an otherwise miserable day for back pain sufferers.

An exercise program can often be viewed in the same manner as a physician's prescription for medicine. *Specific exercises designed for individualized problems.* Your physical therapist will be able to direct your program to meet your particular needs.

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