

Small Stretches & Big Benefits

Before, During and After Work

No matter what your job, chances are you can bring in a few of these stretches and exercises during the course of your day. Give them a try! (Be sure to check with your doctor first if health restrictions apply.)*

Deep Breathing

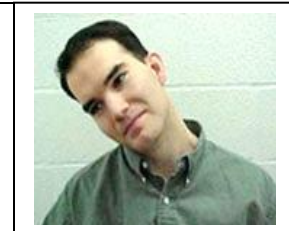
- While standing, or in an otherwise relaxed position.
- Place one hand on the abdomen and one on the chest.
- Inhale slowly through the nose.
- Hold for 4 seconds.
- Exhale slowly through the mouth.
- Repeat.

Cable Stretch

- While sitting with chin in, stomach in, shoulders relaxed, hands relaxed in lap, and feet flat on the floor, imagine a cable pulling your head upward.
- Hold for 3 seconds and relax.
- Repeat 3 times.

Side Bend: Neck Stretch

- Tilt head to one side (ear towards shoulder).
- Hold for 15 seconds.
- Relax.
- Repeat 3 times on each side.



Diagonal Neck Stretch

- Turn head slightly and then look down as if looking in your pocket.
- Hold for 15 seconds.
- Relax.
- Repeat 3 times on each side.



Shoulder Shrug

- Slowly bring shoulders up to the ears and hold for approximately 3 seconds.
- Rotate shoulders back and down.
- Repeat 10 times.

Executive Stretch

- While sitting, lock hands behind head.
- Bring elbows back as far as possible.
- Inhale deeply while leaning back and stretching.
- Hold for 20 seconds.
- Exhale and relax.
- Repeat 1 time.



Foot Rotation

- While sitting, slowly rotate each foot from the ankle.
- Rotate 3 times in one direction, then 3 times in the opposite direction.
- Relax.
- Repeat 1 time.

Hand Shake

- While sitting, drop arms to the side.
- Shake hands downward gently.
- Repeat frequently.

Wrist Stretch

- Hold arm straight out in front of you.
- Pull the hand backwards with the other hand, then pull downward.
- Hold for 20 seconds.
- Relax.
- Repeat 3 times each.



Hand Massage (Note: Perform very gently!)

- Massage the inside and outside of the hand using the thumb and fingers.
- Repeat frequently (including before beginning work).

Finger Massage (Note: Perform very gently!)

- Massage fingers of each hand individually, slowly, and gently.
- Move toward nail gently. Massage space between fingers. Perform daily.

Warm Up Before Work!

Just as an athlete prepares before playing a sport, you too should prepare before work to help prevent back injuries. These slow stretches help prevent back injuries and make your muscles more flexible. Hold each position for 20 seconds and repeat 3 times.



Back Exercises

It doesn't take much time to improve the strength and flexibility of your back. In just 10 minutes a day, you can perform a few exercises, which can prevent a lifetime of low back pain!

Partial Sit-up

This exercise strengthens your stomach muscles:

- Lie on your back with both knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Slowly raise your head and shoulders off the floor, keeping your hands across your chest.
- Work up to 30 repetitions.



Bridge

This exercise strengthens your low back:

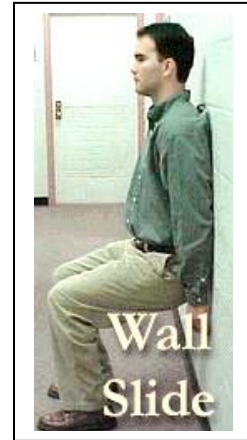
- Lie on your back with both knees bent and your feet flat on the floor.
- With arms lying at your sides, tighten stomach muscles, squeeze buttocks, and slowly raise your hips into the air. Hold for 5 seconds and then slowly bring the buttocks back to the floor. Repeat 20 times.



Wall Slide

This exercise strengthens your back and leg muscles:

- Stand with your back against a wall and your feet slightly apart.
- Slide into a half-sit. Hold as long as you can; slide back up.
- Repeat 5 times.



Aerobic Exercise

Aerobic exercise stretches and strengthens the muscles that support your low back, which combined with healthy eating can also help you maintain your ideal weight. If you're overweight, the extra pounds add to the strain on your lower back. Aerobic exercise like walking can help you lose weight.

Proper Rest

The best position for resting the back muscles is lying on your back on your living room floor with a pillow under your knees and a rolled up towel under your neck. You can also lie on your side in the fetal position—bend the knees to reduce strain on the lower back and put a pillow between your knees, and under your head and neck to keep them level.