

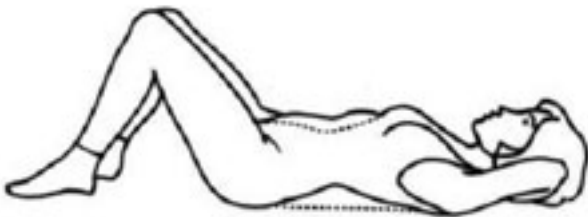
## BACK EXERCISES

### Position: Lying on your back

\*Before beginning any back exercise, FIRST position your low back in neutral: Envision the face of a clock on your abdomen, with 12:00 at the belly button and 6:00 at the pubic bone. Tilt your pelvis so that 12:00 rocks toward the floor and then 6:00 rocks toward the floor. Do this repeatedly 10 times in each direction gently and slowly. The neutral position is the position of greatest comfort within that range. Tighten your abdominal muscles to help maintain this position. From this neutral position, perform the following exercises (while on your back).

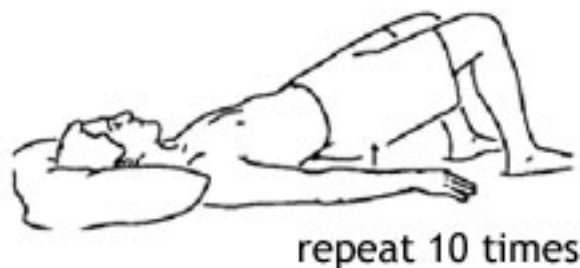
### Exercise TIPS!

- Check with your doctor before starting an exercise program.
- Pace yourself! Start slow and work up to more vigorous exercise.
- Stretch slowly to a point short of discomfort. Don't jerk or bounce.
- Don't forget to breathe while exercising!



### 1. Bridge-Up

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Keep your feet and palms flat on the floor. Slowly raise your hips upward, tightening your buttocks. Raise your hips high enough to straighten your back. Hold for 5 seconds. Lower your hips to the floor.



## 2. Partial Curl-Up

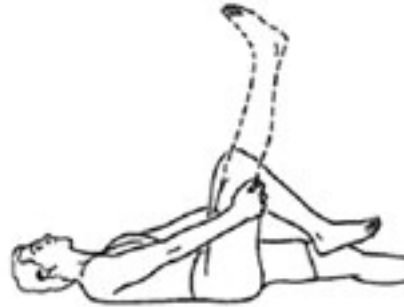
Cross your arms loosely. Tighten your abdomen and curl halfway up, keeping your head in line with your shoulders. Hold for 5 seconds and then uncurl to lie down.



Repeat 10 times.

## 3. Hamstring Stretch

Put a towel behind one knee or calf. Use the towel to pull the leg toward your chest, keeping the leg straight or slightly bent. Hold for 20 seconds and then lower the leg. **Repeat 3 times**, and then switch legs.



## 4. Trunk Rotation

Drop both knees to one side and turn your head, looking in the other direction. Keep your shoulders flat on the floor. Hold for 20 seconds, then slowly switch sides. Perform 3 times on each side.



## 1. Press-Up

Position: **Lying on your stomach**

Lie face down, feet slightly apart, forehead on the floor. Push yourself up on your forearms, keeping your neck straight. Stop when you feel light pressure in your lower back. Hold for 20 seconds, then slowly lie back down.

**Repeat 3 times.**



## **Position: On hands and knees**

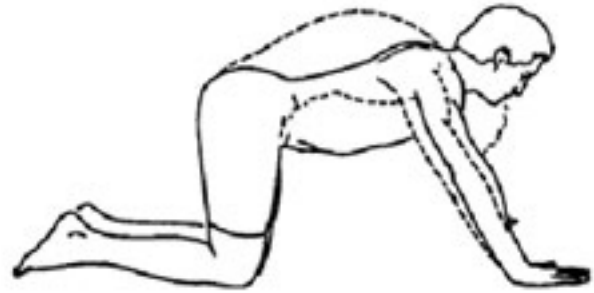
### **1. Cat Stretch**

Begin by tightening your abdominal and buttocks muscles to press your back upward. Let your head drop slightly. Hold for 5 seconds.

Next, slowly relax your abdominal and buttocks muscles, lifting your head and letting your back sag. Keep your weight evenly distributed.

Hold for 10 seconds.

Repeat 3 times.



### **2. Arm Reach**

Stretch one arm straight out in front of you. Do not raise your head or let your supporting shoulder sag.

To prevent your trunk from sagging, tighten your abdominal muscles!

Hold for 5 seconds, then lower arm to ground.

Repeat 10 times, then switch arms.



### **3. Arm Reach with Leg Reach**

Extend one leg straight back while extending opposite arm straight forward.

Do not arch your back or let your head or body sag.

Tighten your abdominal muscles!

Hold for 5 seconds, then lower knee and arm to ground.

Repeat 10 times, then switch legs.



## 4. Spine Stretch

Assume the hands and knees position. Begin to sit backwards onto your heels until you feel a good, painless stretch in your buttocks. Hold for 20 seconds, then return to hands and knees position. Repeat 3 times.



### Position: Standing

#### 1. Hip Flexor Stretch

Kneel on the floor. Put one foot on the floor in front of you with the knee slightly bent. If needed, hold on to a chair for balance. Tighten your abdomen. Move your hips forward, keeping your back and shoulders upright. Feel the stretch in front of your hip. Hold for 15 seconds.

Return to starting position.

Repeat 3 times, then switch sides.



#### 2. Quadriceps Stretch

Stand arm's length from a wall. Place one hand on it. With your other hand, grasp your ankle on the same side. Pull the heel towards your buttocks, and then stand with your knees together.

Do not arch your back.

Hold for 15 seconds.

Repeat 3 times, then switch legs.



### 3. Calf Stretch

Face a wall 2 feet away.  
Step toward the wall with one foot.  
Place both palms on the wall and  
bend your front knee. Lean forward,  
keeping the back leg straight and  
heel on the floor. Hold for 15 sec-  
onds.  
Repeat 3 times, then switch legs.

