

PATIENT GUIDE



BACK TO LIFE

Spine Health Program





There is a 95% chance that you will not be “fixed” after your first visit. A successful physical therapy experience will require patients to make lifestyle changes and behavior modifications that will not only improve their overall health, but change their quality of life for the better. In the words of Maya Angelou, “Nothing works unless you do.” If you want a change, you have to be the one to catalyze it.

Jessica Beggs, PT, DPT

Neck and back pain are caused by multiple factors including poor posture, weight gain, injury, muscle weakness, poor body mechanics and many others. Traditional programs mainly treat the acute pain sources and offer limited strengthening and flexibility programs.

LEGACY NEURO'S BACK TO LIFE SPINE HEALTH PROGRAM TAKES A NEW APPROACH

Legacy's Back to Life Spine Health Program is a holistic approach aimed at identifying spine pain risk factors and creating an individualized strengthening and flexibility program. We provide intensive education about preventative measures including ergonomic training and body mechanics training. We also offer education and support for lifestyle modifications including weight loss, increased fitness level and tobacco cessation. These life changes are all important in long-term spine health.

The goal is to provide our patients with all the tools they need to increase their spine health and adopt a new lifestyle that protects and promotes a healthy spine. Our spinal fitness instructions will reduce pain, increase quality of life and protect the spine from future injury.

With increased strength, stability and fitness levels, our patients will be able to enjoy life with reduced pain, ultimately improving their overall well-being.

OUR PATIENTS WILL BE BACK TO LIFE!

OUR 12 WEEK PROGRAM

The Back to Life Spine Health Program provides patients with individualized, targeted strengthening programs that will help break the chronic pain cycle.

PROGRAM GOALS

- Pain reduction and prevention
- Preventative maintenance of the spine
- Posture assessment and improvement
- Increased flexibility and mobility of the spine
- Prevention of recurrent injuries and/or back pain/symptoms
 - Workplace ergonomics
 - Body mechanics
- Fitness level modification
- BMI modification
- Lifestyle changes
 - Cessation of tobacco usage: tobacco products have damaging effects on the spine
 - Weight loss: extra weight can increase pressure on your spine and lead to pain
 - Return to pre-injury athletic/play/working status

FACTORS FOR SPINAL HEALTH

- Strength
- Stability
- Flexibility
- Endurance

OUR COMPREHENSIVE INTEGRATED CARE MODEL

- Interventional spine physicians and surgeons identify/treat the pain source.
- Initial consult with our spine-focused physical therapist to assess the spinal condition and formulate your spine health plan with baseline measurements of metrics to be tracked.

Research has proven that strengthening back muscles helps to increase quality of life, reduce pain, and protect the back from future injury.

TREATMENT

PHASE ONE: Flexibility, Strength and Active Pain Treatments

- Acute and chronic treatments as indicated including E-stim, post-injection protocol, traction therapy, etc.
- Emphasis on appropriate muscle length
- Building strength and stability
- Postural awareness and ergonomic education
- Create personal and program goals

PHASE TWO: Mobility and Active Pain Treatments

- Acute and chronic treatments as indicated including E-stim, post-injection protocol, traction therapy, etc.
- Continue strengthening exercises, adding resistance to increase strength gains
- Dynamic exercises for stability with movement
- Increase aerobic exercise and activity/fitness level
- Body mechanics and lifestyle modification education
- Review progress toward personal goals

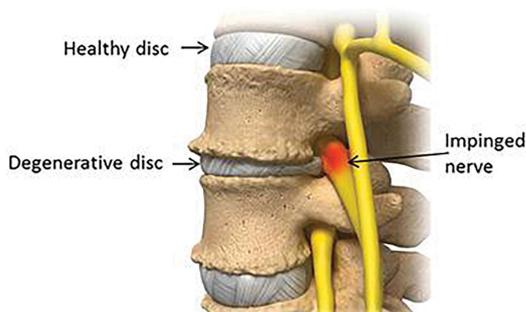
PHASE THREE: Maintenance and Prevention Training and Certification

- Overall core/back/neck health and strengthening
- Review postural awareness, ergonomics, and body mechanics education
- Review risk factor modification education
- Review personal and program goals to assess progress
- Celebrate with graduation certificate and 'Back to Life' t-shirt!

COMMON CONDITIONS

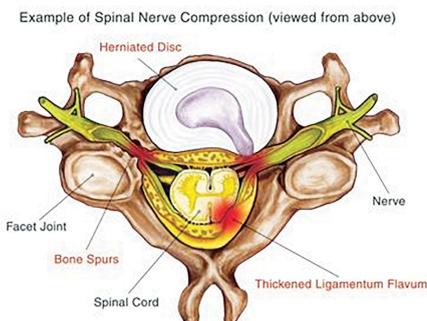
Degenerative Disc Disease

This condition manifests when a spinal disc weakens from repetitive stress and strain. As the disc height decreases, vertebral bones above and below may touch or get closer to one another which in turn can pinch nearby nerve roots causing increased pain symptoms.



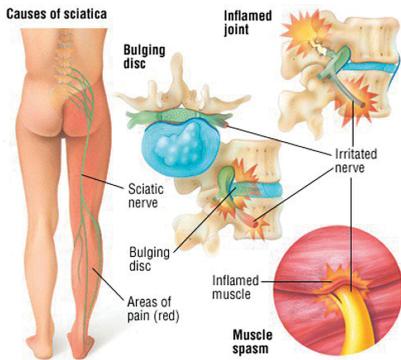
Spinal Stenosis

Stenosis is a medical term implying a narrowing of an open space. When referring to the spine, there are multiple areas that can narrow and cause subsequent nerve pain referral patterns. Spinal stenosis can occur in both the cervical spine (neck) and lumbar spine (low back).



Radiculopathy

The spinal cord branches out from the spine to all parts of the body. The part of the nerve that connects to the spinal cord is the nerve root. If a nerve root is injured or pinched, you can experience pain, weakness, numbness or tingling in the part of the body served by that nerve, frequently causing symptoms in one or both legs (lumbar) or arms (cervical).



Facet Degeneration

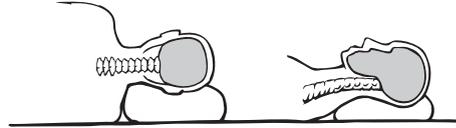
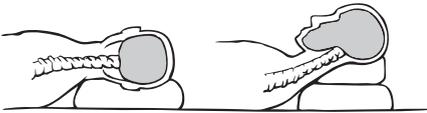
The facet joints are structures that connect the spinal vertebrae to one another. These joints are lined with cartilage that allows the bones to glide smoothly over each other. Degeneration may arise when the cartilage is worn down as a result of aging, injury, or wear and tear.



BODY MECHANICS

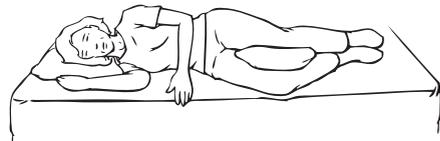
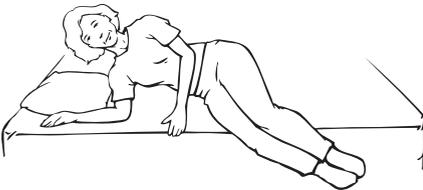
PROPER SLEEPING POSTURES

You may use a pillow under your arm with side sleeping, for proper alignment of the upper spine.

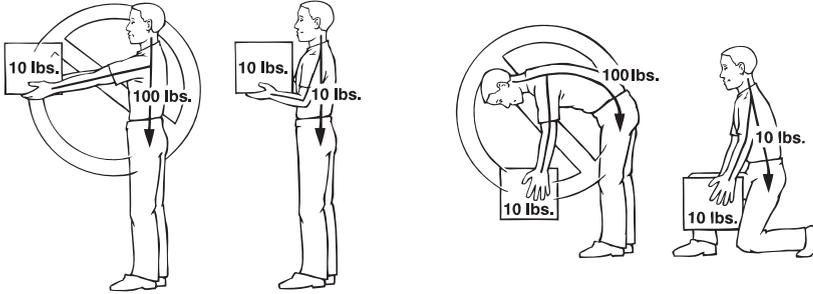


GETTING IN AND OUT OF BED

Breathe out as you push up or lay down so as to use the abdominal muscles to support your back.

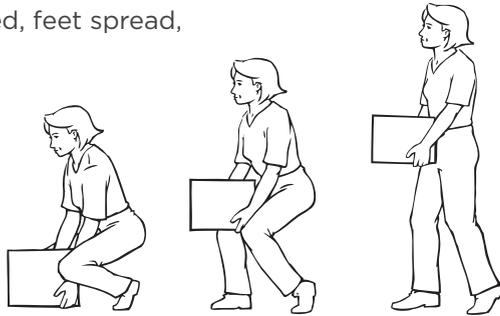


KEEP WEIGHT CLOSE TO BODY



THE DIAGONAL LIFT

Squat, head up, back arched, feet spread, one foot ahead as you lift.



THE POWER LIFT

Partial squat, head up, back arched, feet spread, one foot ahead as you lift. Keep abdominal muscles tight.



BODY MECHANICS

THE TRIPOD LIFT

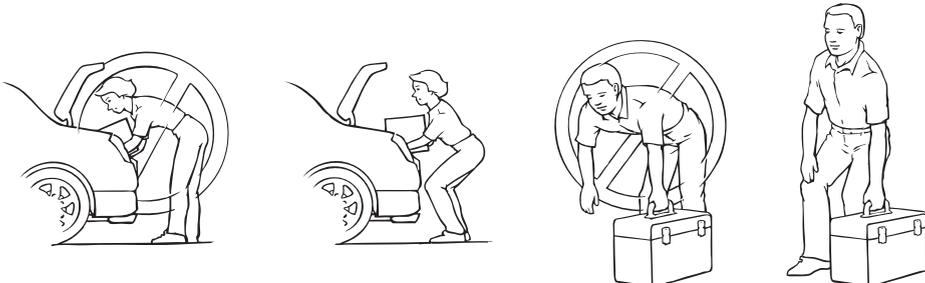


BENDING AND LIFTING

To reach in low places, kneel instead of bending at the waist.



Bend at the hips, not at the back. Pretend you have a book on your head and you don't want it to fall off. Remember to use a partial squat lift for items that don't require kneeling down.



THE 5 L'S OF LIFTING

Lordosis

Maintain the hollow in your low back throughout lift.

Legs

Always use your legs and not your back while lifting.

Lever

Keep the load close to your body with your back in an upright position thereby reducing the lever arm.

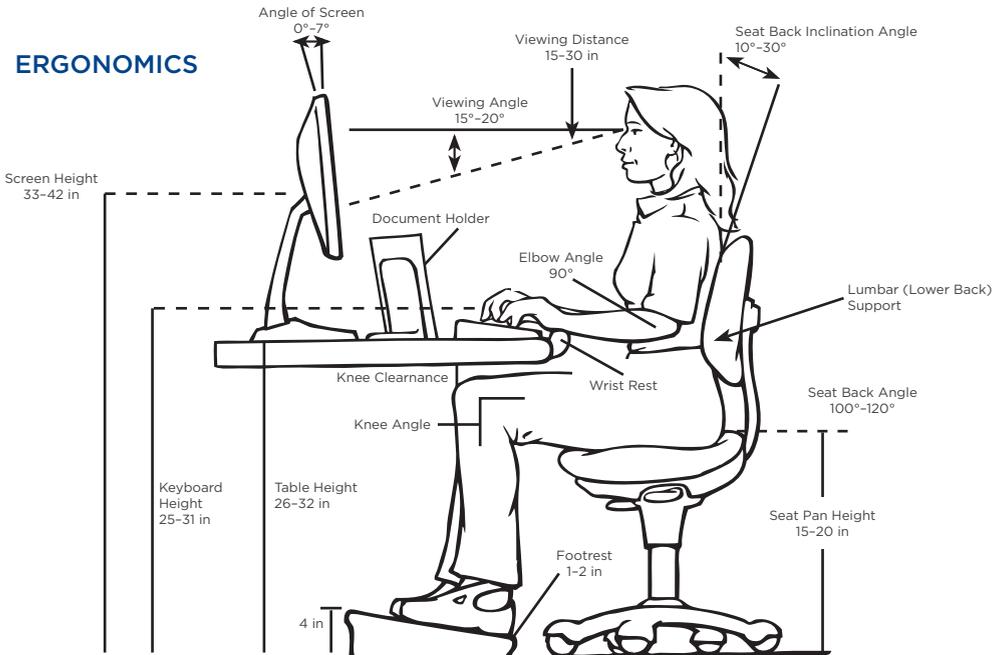
Lungs

Just prior to lifting the load inhale, set your abdominals, and as you lift, breathe out through pursed lips.

Load

Always test the weight of the load before lifting. If too heavy, get help.

ERGONOMICS



WALKING FOR FITNESS

Walking Safety Guidelines

PAY ATTENTION TO THE WEATHER

- Avoid outdoor walking activities when temperature exceeds 85°F or humidity exceeds approximately 60 percent.
- Avoid walking in extreme cold, high wind chill, risky air pollution levels or when there is threat of lightning.
- Have an indoor alternative ready for bad weather days.
(ex: stationary bicycle or treadmill)
- Wear comfortable, supportive walking shoes and appropriate clothing for existing weather conditions.
- Consider using sunglasses and sunscreen during the day, and reflective clothing for walking at night.

HYDRATE

- Keep water available, consuming liberally unless you have a medical condition that prevents this.

USE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- Carry a cell phone, avoid dangerous traffic conditions, and choose crime-safe walking routes. Walk with a buddy when possible.
- Avoid walking on dangerous surfaces (wet, non-level, rough, etc.).

Pre & Post Walking Health Guidelines

WARM-UP

- It is effective to begin with slow walking and progressively increase the pace to warm up. However, it would be more beneficial to do a total body warm-up before walking.

COOL-DOWN

- Gradually reduce your pace toward the end of a walking session to sufficiently cool down.
- Walking should be followed by stretching.
- Increase aerobic intensity by increasing duration, frequency or speed gradually as fitness improves. You should walk at a pace that mildly to moderately increases your heart rate. When beginning a walking program, always walk to pain tolerance.
- If spine pain begins to increase, don't hesitate to sit for a few minutes and then proceed with walk. If severe spine pain persists and does not go away with sitting, then discontinue walking at that time and contact your physical therapist or try again the next day. If you develop chest pain or shortness of breath while walking, contact your PCP or cardiac doctor.

People who have problems related to balance or who have not fully recovered from lower back or knee problems should walk on level surfaces.

CERVICAL EXERCISES

CERVICAL ISOMETRICS

Using light pressure from fingertips, press into left temple. Resist bending sideways.

- HOLD 5 SECONDS
- REPEAT 5 TIMES
- REPEAT ONCE DAILY



CERVICAL ISOMETRICS

Using light pressure from fingertips, press back of head. Resist bending head backwards.

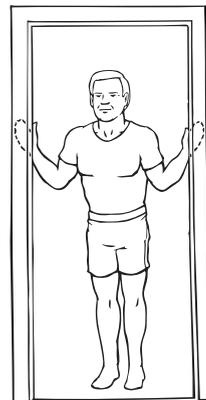
- HOLD 5 SECONDS
- REPEAT 5 TIMES
- REPEAT ONCE DAILY



PECTORAL STRETCH

Standing in doorway or corner with hands just above shoulder level and feet approximately 16–18 inches from corner, lean forward until a comfortable stretch is felt across chest.

- HOLD 30 SECONDS
- REPEAT 3 TIMES
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



Don't go to pain!

CERVICAL ISOMETRICS

Using light pressure from fingertips, press into right temple. Resist bending head sideways.

- HOLD 5 SECONDS
- REPEAT 5 TIMES
- REPEAT ONCE DAILY



CERVICAL ISOMETRICS

Using light pressure from fingertips, press at forehead. Resist bending head forward.

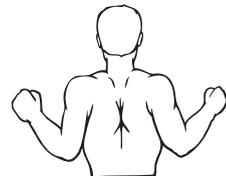
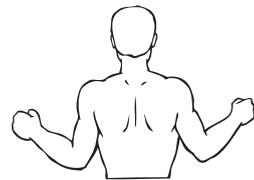
- HOLD 5 SECONDS
- REPEAT 5 TIMES
- REPEAT ONCE DAILY



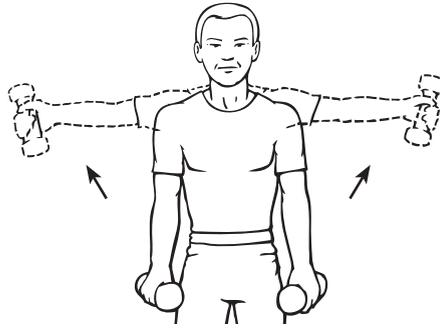
SCAPULAR ADDUCTION

Sit or stand, elbows at sides, bent to 90 degrees, forearms forward, pinch shoulder blades together. Keep elbows at sides.

- REPEAT 10 TIEMS
- REPEAT 2 SETS
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



CERVICAL EXERCISES



JOBES EXERCISE

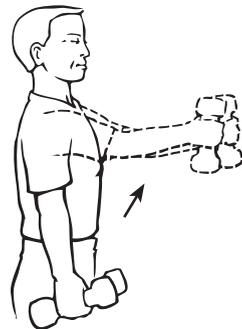
Holding 1-3 lb. weights in hands, raise arms out from sides with thumbs up.
DO NOT GO ABOVE SHOULDERS!

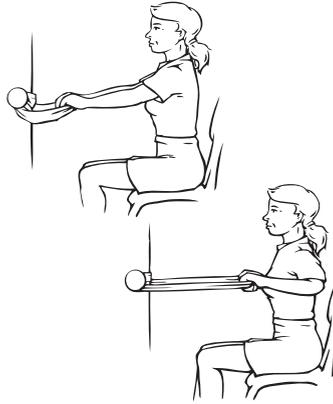
- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- REPEAT 1 SET
(Progress to 2 or 3)
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY

JOBES EXERCISE

Holding 1-3 lb. weights in hand, raise both arms up from hips to shoulder height. Keep a slight bend in elbows and thumbs up.

- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- REPEAT 1 SET
(Progress to 2 or 3)
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY





RHOMBOID PULLS

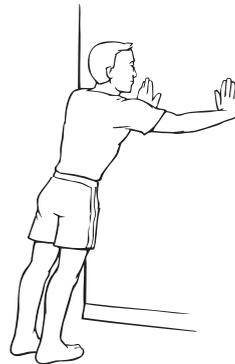
Facing door with theraband anchored to door knob, pull arms back, bringing shoulder blades together.

- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- REPEAT 2 SETS
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY

WALL PUSH-UPS

With arms slightly wider apart than shoulder width and feet approximately 12-18 inches from wall, gently lean body toward wall.

- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- REPEAT 1-2 SETS
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



LUMBAR EXERCISES

TOE RAISES (STANDING)

Roll back on heels.

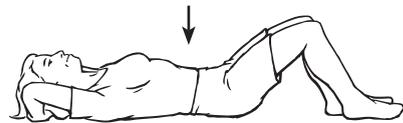
- REPEAT 20 TIMES
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



TA BRACING

Pull belly button in and tighten stomach muscles. Try to keep small arch in back.

- HOLD FOR 10 SECONDS, REPEAT 10 TIMES
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY
- PROGRESS TO DOING THIS WITH ACTIVITY



MINI SQUATS

Keeping feet flat on floor, shoulder width apart, squat as low as is comfortable. Use support as necessary.

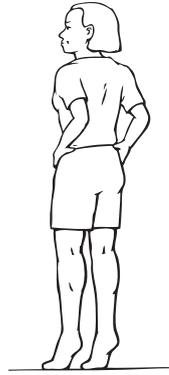
- REPEAT 10 TIMES PER SET
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



HEEL RAISE

Raise on balls of feet.

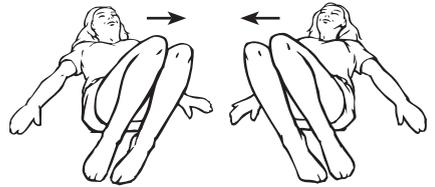
- REPEAT 20 TIMES PER SET
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



PELVIS ROCKS

Feet on floor, slowly rock knees from side to side in small, pain-free range of motion. Allow lower back to rotate slightly.

- REPEAT 20 TIMES PER SET
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



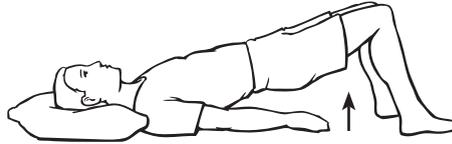
SEATED MARCHING (Seated Knee Raises)

Lift your right knee and lower it. Lift your left knee and lower it, as if you were marching.

- REPEAT 20 TIMES
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



LUMBAR EXERCISES



BRIDGING

Slowly raise buttocks from floor, keeping stomach tight.

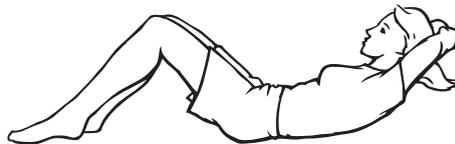
- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



PRONE STRAIGHT LEG RAISE

With abdomen and head supported, keep right/left knee locked and raise leg at hip. Avoid arching low back.

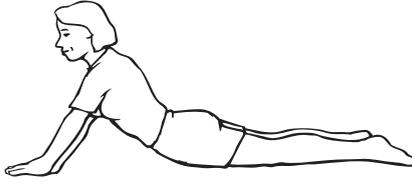
- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



PARTIAL SIT-UPS

Keeping hands clasped behind head to support neck, tilt pelvis to flatten back. Raise head and shoulders from surface.

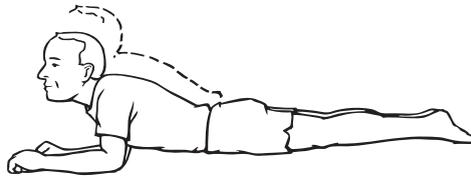
- REPEAT 10 TIMES PER SET
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



PRONE PRESS UP

Start by facing down with your hands under your shoulders. Extend your arms to bring your chest up while relaxing your back.

- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- PERFORM 1-2 TIMES DAILY



PRONE ON ELBOWS

Lying face down, slowly press up and prop yourself up on your elbows.

- HOLD FOR 20-30 SECONDS. REPEAT 3 TIMES
- PERFORM 1-2 TIMES DAILY



GLUTE SQUEEZES

Tighten buttock muscles.

- REPEAT 20 TIMES
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY

LUMBAR EXERCISES

WALL SLIDE

Keep head, shoulders, and back against wall, with feet out in front and slightly wider than shoulder width. Slowly lower buttocks by sliding down wall just above 90 degrees. Keep back flat.

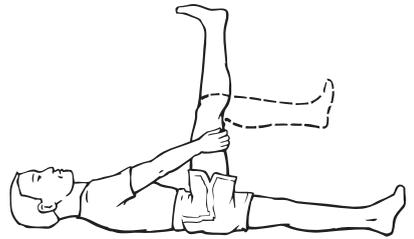
- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- REPEAT 2 SETS PER DAY
- REPEAT 1-2 TIMES DAILY



SCIATIC NERVE GLIDE SUPINE

Start by lying on your back and holding the back of your knee. Next, attempt to straighten your knee. Lastly, hold this position and then bend your ankle forward and back as shown.

- REPEAT 20-30 TIMES
- PERFORM 1-2 TIMES DAILY

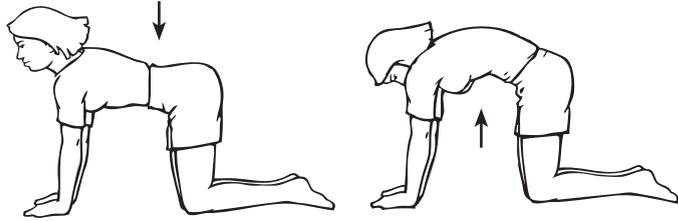


HIP ADDUCTION

Place a ball or pillow between your knees and press your knees together so that you squeeze the object firmly.

- HOLD FOR 10 SECONDS
- REPEAT 10-15 TIMES
- PERFORM 1-2 TIMES DAILY

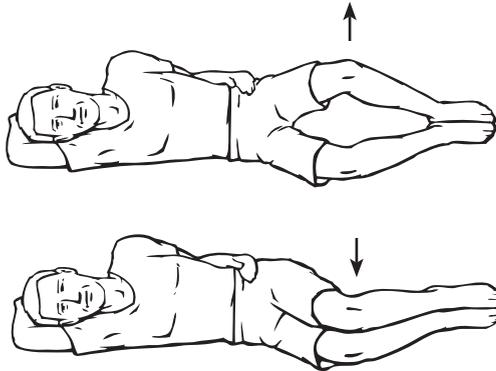




CAT CAMEL

Start on hands and knees. Arch your back by dropping your stomach toward the floor then gently curve your back toward the ceiling.

- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- PERFORM 1-2 TIMES DAILY



CLAMSHELL

Lying on your side, stack your knees and ankles together. Lift your top knee into the air and slowly return to the starting position.

- REPEAT 10 TIMES
- PERFORM 2 SETS, ONE EACH SIDE
- PERFORM 1-2 TIMES DAILY



LEGACY

PHYSICAL THERAPY

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