Back Exercises

Back exercises help treat and prevent back injuries. The goal of back exercises is to increase the strength of your abdominal and back muscles and the flexibility of your back. These exercises should be started when you no longer have back pain. Back exercises include:

1. **Pelvic Tilt -** Lie on your back with your knees bent. Tilt your pelvis until the lower part of your back is against the floor. Hold this position 5-10 sec and repeat 5-10 times.
2. **Knee to Chest -** Pull first one knee up against your chest and hold for 20-30 seconds, repeat this with the other knee, and then both knees. This may be done with the other leg straight or bent, whichever feels better.
3. **Sit-Ups or Curl-Ups -** Bend your knees 90 degrees. Start with tilting your pelvis, and do a partial, slow sit-up, lifting your trunk only 30-45 degrees off the floor. Take at least 2-3 sec for each sit-up. Do not do sit-ups with your knees out straight. If partial sit-ups are difficult, simply do the above but with only tightening your abdominal muscles and holding it as directed.
4. **Hip-Lift -** Lie on your back with your knees flexed 90 degrees. Push down with your feet and shoulders as you raise your hips a couple inches off the floor; hold for 10 sec, repeat 5-10 times.
5. **Back arches -** Lie on your stomach, propping yourself up on bent elbows. Slowly press on your hands, causing an arch in your low back. Repeat 3-5 times. Any initial stiffness and discomfort should lessen with repetition over time.
6. **Shoulder-Lifts -** Lie face down with arms beside your body. Keep hips and torso pressed to floor as you slowly lift your head and shoulders off the floor.

Do not overdo your exercises, especially in the beginning. Exercises may cause you some mild back discomfort which lasts for a few minutes; however, if the pain is more severe, or lasts for more than 15 minutes, do not continue exercises until you see your caregiver. Improvement with exercise therapy for back problems is slow. See your caregivers for assistance with developing a proper back exercise program.

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