

## Precautions For Those With Spinal Problems:

- Jumping rope puts too much pressure on the discs -avoid.
- Running is fine if it doesn't increase lower back pain.
- When walking or running, wear supportive, well-cushioned shoes and walk or run on a level surface.
- Experiment with exercises. If 'rows' or 'dead lifts' produce pain, for example, perform other types of exercises

Do not ignore pain. If you feel increased pain or pain spreading to the legs, do not continue the activity as you may cause unnecessary stress or damage to your joints. Learn to "read" your body and know when to stop or modify an activity.

No matter what condition you may have, you can benefit from a healthy spine. Just ask the many professional athletes who regularly maintain their vertebral health.

Among the many things contributing to your health: the quality of the air, food and water you take in; how you handle emotional stress; your inherited weaknesses and strengths; your use of drugs; exercise; and relaxation- a healthy spine is absolutely essential. In some people it is a major factor and can make the difference between a life of health, strength and vitality or a life of disease, weakness and disability.

### THE FIVE PILLARS OF HEALTH

**Mindset-** Manage or reduce the stress in you life. Each year new studies indicate the deleterious effects of stress. Stay inspired and develop a positive attitude toward yourself and your health.

**Diet-** It is becoming more difficult each year to eat right. Treat yourself to a healthy diet that is low in saturated fat, high in soluble and insoluble fiber, and high in raw food carbohydrates.

**Exercise-** Exercise at least every other day-aerobic & resistance.

**Rest-** Get enough sound sleep. The body and brain repairs and balances itself while you are sleeping.

**Posture** – Maintain good posture while at work or play. Prevent problems with regular chiropractic care.



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## General Back Exercises



Exercise is a vital part of the Five Pillars of Health\* and as such, improves and maintains normal, comfortable back function. Strong, flexible and balanced muscles keep the vertebral column well supported and aligned, which prevents back pain, injury and nerve damage which can affect the entire body. Research has shown that people who are fit are more resistant to back injuries and recover quicker when they do have injuries.

The following are is excellent choice of strength and flexibility maintenance if you are not already involved in a regular regimen of exercise (*yoga, Pilates, swimming etc..*) which includes both strength and flexibility training and is recommended for people who currently are not experiencing back pain. **Modifications to this exercise regimen are necessary if you have back pain.** Do not continue exercises if pain is produced. Seek the advice of your chiropractor or physical therapist for modifications to this exercise regimen.

### Exercises can be divided into three basic groups:

1. **Strengthening:** repeated muscle contractions until the muscle becomes tired.
2. **Stretching / Flexibility:** slow, sustained lengthening of the muscle.
3. **Aerobic:** steady exercise using large muscle groups.

*Performed slowly and comfortably to avoid injury*

**Strengthening exercises** -help increase muscle tone and improve the quality and strength of muscles providing energy and a feeling of wellness to help you perform daily, routine activities. Adequate strength of abdominal and back muscles helps stabilize the spine, allows proper spinal movement and maintains correct posture. Strong hip and leg muscles are important to perform proper lifting techniques and body mechanics. Here are some good strengthening exercises:

- **Abdominal Curl Ups:** Lay on back, arms at sides, knees bent, tilt pelvis to flatten back. Raise shoulders and head. Hold 5-10 secs, repeat 10 times



- **Oblique Trunk Raises:** Lie with back flat. Raise head and bring shoulder toward opposite hip, reaching with your hands. Hold 5 seconds. 10 times per side



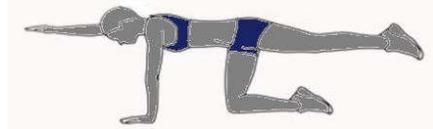
- **Prone Trunk Raises:** Face down with arms at sides. Tighten buttocks, lift your head/shoulders up from the floor as high as you can go. Hold 5-10 secs. Repeat 10 times



- **Prone Alternate Arm/Leg Lift:** Face down with a pillow under pelvis & abdomen. Lift Right leg & left arm 2" above floor



**Exercise can be also done on all fours.** Hold 5 secs. Repeat 10 times per side



**Stretching Exercises:** Flexibility is the ability to move arms & legs through full range of motion. Flexible tissues around spine & pelvis allows full movement, prevents abnormal forces on the joints, decreases possibility of injury, prepares muscles for activity & *help maintain chiropractic adjustments*. Should be done before & after workouts to prevent muscle strain and help avoid injuries. Stretch slowly (*no bouncing*) hold 15-20 secs

- **Lying Down Hamstring Stretch:** Lying down with knees bent, raise one leg, and supporting the back of thigh with your hands- straighten the knee until a comfortable stretch is felt in back of the thigh. Hold 20 secs, repeat 3 times per side



- **Double Knee to Chest Stretch:** Lie on floor with back relaxed and straight. Pull both knees toward chest until you feel a stretch in your lower back. Hold 5 secs. Repeat 5 times



- **Standing Backward Bend:** Stand straight with hands on your waist. Bend backward, arching your back as far as you comfortably can while keeping your balance. Hold 5 secs.



Repeat 5 times

- **Quadriceps Stretch:** Resting one hand on an object for balance, bring your foot up behind your thigh. Grab the top of your foot and pull the foot toward your buttock until a stretch is felt in front of thigh. Hold 20-30 secs. Repeat 2-3 times per leg



**Aerobic Exercises** - provides cardiovascular conditioning, strengthens the heart and lungs and improves the body's ability to use oxygen. Other benefits include increased energy levels, improved mood & sleep habits, decreased blood pressure as well as burning calories and increasing metabolism helping with weight loss. They include:

- Jogging
- Cycling
- Skating
- Rowing
- Swimming
- Walking
- Cross-country skiing
- Dancing

To achieve maximum benefits, you should gradually work up to an aerobic session lasting 20 - 60 minutes, 3 - 5 times a week. Please check with your doctor before starting any program. Your exercise routine should consist of a 5-minute warm-up before the aerobic activity and 5 to 10 minutes of cool down.