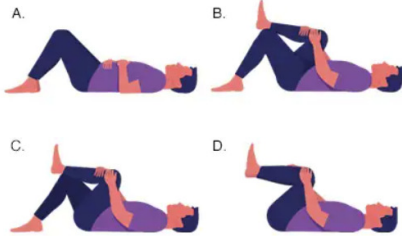


STRETCHES FOR CHRONIC BACK PAIN

Resource: MayoClinic

Disclaimer: Consult with your doctor before starting any new exercises especially if you are healing from an injury. If you feel any pain, stop immediately.

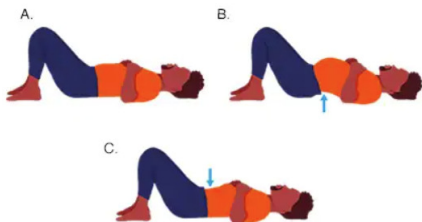


Knee-to-chest Stretch

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor (A). Using both hands, pull up one knee and press it to your chest (B). Tighten your abdominals and press your spine to the floor. Hold for 5 seconds. Return to the starting position and repeat with the opposite leg (C). Return to the starting position and then repeat with both legs at the same time (D). Repeat each stretch 2 to 3 times — preferably once in the morning and once at night.

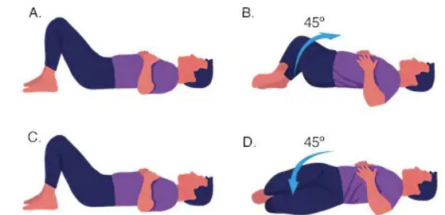
Lower Back Rotational Stretch

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor (A). Keeping your shoulders firmly on the floor, roll your bent knees to one side (B). Hold for 5 to 10 seconds. Return to the starting position (C). Repeat on the opposite side (D). Repeat each stretch 2 to 3 times — preferably once in the morning and once at night.



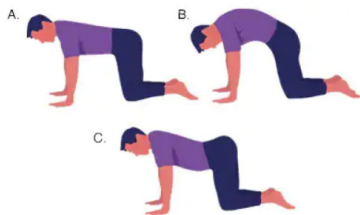
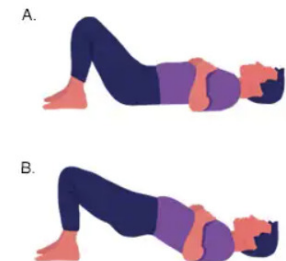
Lower Back Flexibility Exercise

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor (A). Tighten your abdominal muscles so your stomach pulls away from your waistband (B). Hold for five seconds and then relax. Flatten your back, pulling your bellybutton toward the floor (C). Hold for five seconds and then relax. Repeat. Start with five repetitions each day and gradually work up to 30.



Bridge exercise

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor (A). Keeping your shoulders and head relaxed on the floor, tighten your abdominal and gluteal muscles. Then raise your hips to form a straight line from your knees to your shoulders (B). Try to hold the position long enough to complete three deep breaths. Return to the starting position and repeat. Start with five repetitions each day and gradually work up to 30.

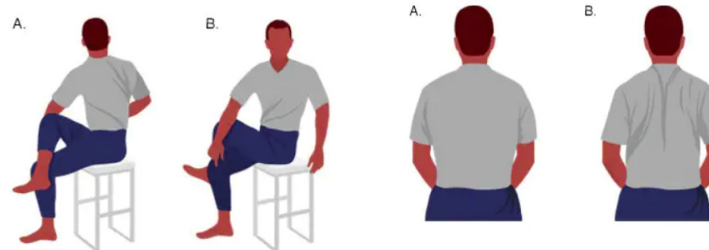


Cat stretch

Position yourself on your hands and knees (A). Slowly arch your back, as if you're pulling your abdomen up toward the ceiling (B). Then slowly let your back and abdomen sag toward the floor (C). Return to the starting position (A). Repeat 3 to 5 times twice a day. Be sure you don't hold your breath. Synchronize breathing in and out with your movement.

Seated lower back rotational stretch

Sit on an armless chair or a stool. Cross your right leg over your left leg. Bracing your left elbow against the outside of your right knee, twist and stretch to the side (A). Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat on the opposite side (B). Repeat this stretch 3 to 5 times on each side twice a day.



Shoulder blade squeeze

Sit on an armless chair or a stool (A). While maintaining good posture, pull your shoulder blades together (B). Hold for five seconds and then relax. Repeat 3 to 5 times twice a day.