

equilibrium

Learn to Manage your Low Back and Neck Pain

THREE STRATEGIES

DISCLAIMER:

Please note: If you have a new spinal complaint and/or severe pain, please seek professional help first. The following general advice given below is only suitable for long standing (sub-acute and chronic) conditions. If you have a diagnosed condition and you are unsure if the following management strategies are applicable for you, please get professional help first.

LOW BACK PAIN Strategy One

Exercise

A. Both knees to chest hold.

Lie supine (on back) on a supportive surface. Bend both knees and bring them to your chest.

Hold for up to 30 seconds and release. Do not rock knees back and forth.





B. One knee to shoulder hold.

After release of both knees to chest, continue stretch by holding one knee to your shoulder on the same side and hold for up to 30 seconds, then release and repeat stretch on the other side.

C. One knee to opposite shoulder hold.

This is similar to the above stretch, except this time hold your knee and gently pull it across to your opposite shoulder and hold for up to 30 seconds.

It is important that while doing this stretch that you don't introduce rotation to your lumbar vertebra (low back).

You can ensure that there is no rotation by keeping both sides of your pelvis flat down on the surface you are lying on.

D. Cat-Cow curls.

Cat-cow curls are best performed on a mat or carpet to prevent bruising of knees against hard surfaces.

Position yourself in the hands and knees posture, like a cat.

Slowly arch your spine up towards the ceiling and hold for up to 30 seconds. Release back to neutral position and hold for 5 seconds. Repeat three times.

The above stretches can be done several times per day, on a daily basis.



LOW BACK PAIN Strategy Two

Heat

Apply heat to affected area. Wheat-bags are suitable, but hot water-bottles can also be used. Please be careful not to burn yourself if you're using a hot water bottle!

Wrapping the hot water bottle in a towel reduces this risk.

Heat improves blood supply to soft tissues, helping them to relax. It also helps to alleviate pain by distracting the central nervous system from the painful area.

Lie supine (on back) with legs raised and/or knees bent.

Support legs on a couch/chair or with some pillows.

Place the wheat-bag directly under your spine on the area of pain and lie on it. Skin contact directly to heat source is NOT necessary.



LOW BACK PAIN Strategy Three

Advice



A. Walking is great exercise.

Walk for as long as your comfort level allows you, but don't push into pain. Walk often throughout the day.

B. Reduce time sitting.

Sitting increases pressure on your spine. If you must sit, then make sure your hips are parallel or higher than your knees, and that your spine is straight. This can be assisted by placing a small pillow between your low back and the chair.



C. When lifting, use your knees and keep your back straight.

Bending from your back will potentially aggravate your pain. Twisting while bending significantly increases your risk of a serious back injury.

NECK PAIN Strategy One

Exercise

Please note: Do not combine neck exercises, as rolling your head over your shoulders can aggravate your neck pain. Do not do exercises if you experience dizziness with head movement. Please seek professional help if you experience dizziness/vertigo.

A. Flexion.

Move your head forward bringing chin to chest and hold for up to 30 seconds. Only move as far as your comfort allows.



B. Extension.

Move head backwards lifting chin upwards and hold for up to 30 seconds. Only move as far as your comfort allows.

C. Lateral flexion.

Move head to the side, bringing your ear down to your shoulder and hold for up to 30 seconds. Do not lift shoulder to your ear. Then repeat for opposite side. Only move as far as your comfort allows.



D. Rotation.

Move head to the side, bringing chin across body, looking backwards over your shoulder and hold for up to 30 seconds. Then repeat on the opposite side. Only move as far as your comfort allows.



NECK PAIN Strategy Two

Heat

Apply heat to affected area. Wheat-bags are suitable, but hot water bottles can also be used.

Please be careful not to burn yourself if you're using a hot water bottle! Wrapping the hot water bottle in a towel reduces this risk.

Heat improves blood supply to soft tissues, helping them to relax. It also helps to alleviate pain by distracting the central nervous system from the painful area.

Lie down with wheat bag under aching neck area with a pillow placed under your knees.



NECK PAIN Strategy Three

Advice

Reduce time sitting, especially in front of a computer or your device (tablet, smartphone etc).

Postures at a desk tend to increase tension in the neck which if allowed to accumulate can develop into headache.

Correct ergonomics will also help to reduce tension in the neck when sitting is unavoidable.



For more information on ergonomics and posture go to the Australian Chiropractors Association website and have a look at their 'straighten up' program. <https://www.chiro.org.au/patients/resources/health-initiatives/straighten-up/>



You can also download the 'straighten up' App from the apple App Store or Google play.

