

Stretches for Low Back Tension and Pain

You may want to use these stretches if you have:

- Morning Back Pain
- Aching or Burning in the Upper Back of the Leg, at Your Sit Bones
- Aching Along the Sacrum, Into 'Tush'
- Lower Back or Hip Pain
- Discomfort/Tension in Small of Back
- Pain/Tension Around Belt Area

Hints and tips:

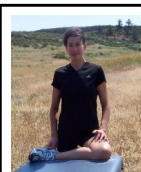
- There are sensors in your muscles which make your muscle fibers contract when you go into a stretch, in order to keep you from 'stretching to a tear'. It typically takes 45-60 seconds for this protective reflex to relax. After this time is when you can get a thorough stretch into the muscle and the connective tissue. SO, we hold these stretches for 2 FULL MINUTES(!) to make changes in the fibers and connective tissue to alleviate pressure. Watch a clock...because a few deep breaths will only take you about 30 seconds. At the 45-60 second mark, you will actually feel the stretch change, often creeping into different parts of the muscles.
- Fit in stretches throughout your day, every day, particularly if you are sitting a lot (i.e. computer work/driving).
- Frequently issues with chronic muscle pain in the back come from a chronic strain related to a posture during sleeping or your work day. Sitting shortens most upper leg muscles, which attach to the pelvis and can be directly related to low back pain. Some of the specific postures to avoid are on our website.
- If you find you are too busy to fit any stretches in during the day, the hamstring 'leg up' and the glute stretch can be done quite well on your bathroom sink while brushing your teeth before bed!



Hip Flexors and Quads: The 'Kneeling Lunge' is a stretch for your hip flexors. Keep your upper body straight and upright. You should feel this stretch in the front hip crease of the BACK leg. Your quads can be stretched by standing on one leg, pulling the heel of the opposite foot to your tush. While in this position, tuck your pelvis, picturing your tailbone curling between your legs.



Hamstrings: The 'leg up' stretch will help the tightness in the hamstrings, which sometimes leads to low back discomfort. Important cues: your heel should be over the edge of the supporting surface to isolate the hamstring muscles (I use my arm of my couch), so you should be able to wiggle your foot without shaking your whole leg. Standing upright, lean your shoulders straight forward, NOT DOWN. At first you may only feel this hamstring stretch at the insertion points of the muscles, at the sit bone and around the knee. We have found this particular stretch to make the most profound difference in chronic tension patterns, when held long enough.



Glutes/Hips: Our 'standing pigeon'. Bring your leg onto a surface as close to perpendicular to your waist as you can, and bend your standing leg until you feel a stretch through the back and side of your bent leg. A similar stretch would be the 'Figure 4': lying on your back, you put one ankle over the opposite knee, and pull your leg closer to your torso.



www.BodyPainMatrix.com

See our website for more information on muscle patterns.