

Tool #14 Back Pain? Will Extension Help?

Generally, this one would be for Flexors!

Lying on your stomach

This exercise is to be done on the floor or bed.

If possible, your starting position will be flat on your abdomen (stomach). If that position is not comfortable, try placing pillows under your abdomen until it is tolerable. You can place up to 3 pillows under your abdomen or stomach.



If you are comfortable with one or two pillows, start with that number instead. Try lying in that position for 2-3 minutes. If you have increased pain, stop. After 5 minutes try removing one of the pillows. The goal is to eventually be lying flat on your abdomen without a pillow and without increased pain. You may be able to do this on day one, or in some cases, you may need a few days to reach the flat position. Let your pain levels dictate how fast you move.



Once you can lie flat without any pillows, make a fist with your right hand and rest your chin on the fist.



If that is comfortable you may progress to having the right fist stacked up onto a fist made by the left hand.



If neither are comfortable you can try just placing a pillow under your head. Try lying for 2-3 minutes in this position several times a day (5-8 times or more)



Once you're able to lie on your abdomen with no increased pain try the following: Get up onto your elbows and just lie there for a minute or two, if pain allows.



If pain allows one may also place the chin on fists (fists stacked together). Allow your low back to sag to the floor or bed. If the pain gets worse go back to the flat. If able to do this exercise pain-free, or with improving pain - progress to baby press-ups.

BABY PRESS-UPS

Eventually, we want you to progress to performing press-ups. **CAUTION:** You should not experience any significant increase in pain while doing this exercise. If you do, you must skip the exercise. Place your hands flat on the floor or bed directly under your shoulders. Use your arms to lift your upper body (like a push-up) while keeping your pelvis or low back on the bed/floor. The pelvis should not be lifted off the floor. The low back should be allowed to sag. If your back is tight, you may only be able to press up about halfway before the pelvis begins to raise up from the bed. Repeat the press-up 5 to 10 times. If painful, STOP. If it's not painful, finish the 5-10 repetitions and STOP. Try it again the next day especially if the pain improved or the pain stayed the same.



As stated earlier, you need to be aware if the exercise is effective. The exercise should be causing the pain levels and locations to decrease, shrink, and retreat. Look for improvement in the farthest most aspect of the pain first. For example, if pain, numbness, or tingling extends out into the foot, the symptoms should improve in the foot first.

FULL PRESS UPS

Eventually, we would like to see you fully extend your arms while keeping your pelvis on the bed. Some people will not be able to obtain this goal. But it should be the end goal, nonetheless.

This exercise should be repeated throughout the day. If you're able the prone lying or prone prop should be performed as many as 5 to 8 times a day. We have heard objections to the frequency but understand this. Sciatica can be a serious condition leading to surgery. To give yourself a chance at healing, you need to be devoted to the exercises, and the suggestions up ahead.



If the press-ups do not make your pain worse, but they are also failing to make it better, try this. You may also try this if you are unable to perform a full press-up. To facilitate movement, try press-ups with overpressure.

PRESS-UPS WITH OVERPRESSURE.

Tool #2 advanced. Take a sheet and roll it up lengthwise. Place the sheet over your pelvis and use your hands to secure the ends of the sheet (with hands flat under shoulders). Perform press-ups with the sheet providing a counter-pressure over the pelvis. **AGAIN, THIS SHOULD ALL BE PAIN-FREE - OR DON'T DO IT.** If

tolerable with no significant increased pain, repeat press-ups with overpressure 5-10 times. If no pain, you can repeat 5-8 times per day as able.



Can also use a stretch-out strap or belt:

