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LIA Lifestyle Instruction Aid

a3. Low Back Exercises

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TECHNIQUE PRINCIPLES FOR LOW BACK EXERCISES

Strong low back and abdominal muscles will protect your lower back. These exercises will need to be done regularly for 6 months in order to get long term relief. Use low force contractions. Start with an 8 second hold, then increase the time as you gain strength. If you cannot hold for 8 seconds, then hold for as long as you can. Perform a set of 5 repetitions. Do 3 sets.

ON YOUR HANDS & KNEES

Get onto the floor or kneel on a chair with hands or forearms on a table. Lower your back down toward the floor (arched) & hold your head up, like someone was riding on your back. Use a pillow under your knees if you need to. Straighten one leg; pointing the toes, until your leg is in a straight line with your back. Hold then change to the other leg. With one leg straight out behind, bend that knee & rotate it outward lifting it to the side. Hold for 8 to 10 seconds then change to the other leg.

ABDOMINAL STRENGTH

This is very important for low back health. You will be strengthening muscles in the front of the abdomen & muscles at the sides of the abdomen. Any store bought apparatus that may help motivate you is good. It does not matter if another product claims to be better than yours. Any product is good. Motivation is the key.

Positioning: Lie on back, knees bent to 90° with head & shoulders supported by a folded blanket & a pillow. Do the pelvic tilt. Contract stomach muscles & “rock” your pelvis toward your head. Do not lift your pelvis off the floor. Begin to lift your head & shoulders, but do not actually lift them. The stomach muscles will contract. If you want to lift your head a little, that's OK. Hold for 2 minutes. In front of a TV, learn to hold throughout an entire commercial break.

FOR THE SIDE ABDOMEN MUSCLES

Same position as above, but let your bent knees fall off to the side as far as they will go. Raise head & shoulder straight toward ceiling as in the above exercise then lift both feet just a little. Turn knees to the other side & repeat.

SIDE ABDOMEN MUSCLES

Lay on your side and support the neck. Lift both knees up of the floor. It is important to lift the bottom knee off the floor or bed. Bend and straighten the knees & hips 6 to 10 times. Roll onto the other side and repeat. Do three sets, of 10, on each side.

WARNING

Sometimes people with degenerative disc problems or low back arthritis will feel some pain in the back or neck. Talk to the doctor if this is happening so a modified program can be recommended.

FINALLY

Get yourself onto a good aerobic program for your heart & lungs.

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