

The stretches given below should help to get you started and to help lessen the pain you are suffering with at the moment. Read through each first to get an idea of how to do them. It is advisable not start with all of them on the first day, ease into them and gradually increase how many you do in a day.

Start slowly to your tolerance, as you may only realise you have over-worked the muscles the following morning, in which case reduce the number of reps. Perform up to 3x a day.

Make sure to do them slowly and gently, **avoid sudden movements and bouncing into the stretch**. Remember they should feel like a stretch and not cause pain; pain is your body's alarm signal that something is not right, **if you find any action is painful, do not continue with it**.

As they feel easier having worked up to performing 6-8 repetitions per stretch, and you are pain free, I can then provide you with exercises to build the musculature to help stabilise the low back and avoid future injury.

Low Back Stretch/Erector Spinae Stretch



Sit with the towel/band around both feet and the legs fully straight. Hold the towel until feel tension in calves, hamstrings, and erector spinae/low back muscles; keep breathing and relax after 10-15 seconds/when stretch starts to ease, you should feel you are able to go further each time. Repeat set 5 times

Hamstring Stretch



When standing straight using support if you need it for balance, put one leg on a step and slowly bend forward at the hips, avoiding any twisting in the back. You should feel stretch in back of leg. Hold position for 5 breaths (inhale and exhale 5 times), relax then repeat set up to 3 times, change to other side.

Piriformis Stretch



Sitting on a chair cross one leg over the other and keeping the back straight, with ankle over the knee and slowly push down on knee to feel the stretch and increase by leaning forward to your tolerance. You should feel the stretch in the buttock and back of the leg.

Hold this position for a count of up to 15 seconds and keep breathing, relax and repeat set 3 times before changing sides.

Hip Flexor Stretch



When on one knee as shown with towel/pillow under knee if required breath in and slowly breathe out and move forward. Should feel stretch in the leg with the knee on the floor in the front of the thigh/groin area, to increase the stretch slowly shift weight forward keeping the back relaxed but straight, hold this position for 15 seconds and shift weight back to relax. Repeat this 3 times.



If kneeling is uncomfortable the stretch can be done standing as shown. Standing straight up with one foot in front of the other tilt the pelvis so you flatten the low back and holding this lunge forward, hold for 10 seconds relax repeat 3 times, swap sides.

Sciatic Nerve Stretch

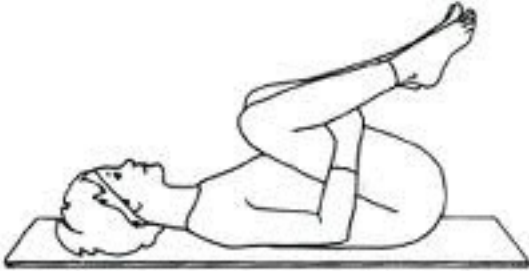


This is for if you have pain/tingling into the legs. Avoid performing this nerve flossing first thing in the morning, as it may be painful due to stiffness.

Begin with first position, whilst breathing in slowly look up to ceiling raise one leg and point toes towards you, then as you slowly breathe out lower head, keeping the leg up point the toes down. You can use your arms to support the leg.

Perform up to 5 reps with each leg. Then, if symptoms (back pain, tingling and numbness) are not aggravated a. You may continue to perform up to 3 times per day.

The next exercise is a stretch for the low back. In the first position bring both knees to your chest, you can stretch further by tucking the chin to your chest, be careful not to strain the neck too much.



These exercises are to stretch the gluteal muscles. Sitting with one leg crossed over the other and increase the stretch by reaching over as shown. Hold each for 10 seconds relax and repeat 5 times, swap sides.

