



"A 21-day action plan, guided by a **certified physiotherapist**, to help you overcome your pain and get back to an active life."

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INTRODUCTION

Your journey to a healthy back starts here



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How to Safely Get Back to an Active Lifestyle with Back Pain?

You've probably heard that staying inactive isn't the best idea when you're dealing with back pain.

But it's not always easy to know what to do—some movements can actually make your pain worse, leaving you hesitant to move at all.

So why do doctors and physiotherapists keep saying exercise is essential for healing?

It's understandable to feel confused. Your back pain might have started because of a wrong movement, overuse, or even years of strain.

The problem is, many people don't know how to ease back into activity.

They rest too much until the pain subsides, then dive straight into intense exercise often making things worse.

The **key is to pace yourself**. Start small, with **gentle movements**, and gradually increase the intensity. This helps your body adapt and prevents your symptoms from flaring up.

2 Another important tip? Take a well-rounded approach to your back exercises.

Incorporating stretches, strength-building, breathing techniques, and stability exercises will not only help your back heal faster but also make it more resilient for everyday tasks and even sports!



I've developed a science-backed, **21-day program** designed to help you safely rebuild strength, improve mobility, and prevent future issues.

Why 21 days?

It's often said that it takes 21 days to build a habit. By following this program filled with exercises and practical tips I've fine-tuned over 4 years you'll not only start feeling better, but you'll also create a solid foundation to keep back pain from coming back.

Ready to get started? Let's take this journey together!

How does the program work?

- Dedicate about 15 minutes each day to complete the exercises and follow the tips provided.
- Take your time mastering each step before moving to the next. If needed, repeat exercises from previous days. It's perfectly fine if it takes you more than 21 days to complete the program.
- If you miss a day, don't jump ahead. Simply pick up where you left off and follow the program in order.
- Important: Listen to your body. Stop immediately if you feel sharp pain, tingling, numbness, or electric shock sensations during any exercise.
- Enjoying the program? Share it with others who might benefit from it, either during the process or once you've completed the 21 days!

Required Equipment (Optional)

While the program can be completed without any equipment, using a few accessories can make your experience more comfortable and enhance your results:

For the Exercises:

- Exercise Mat: Opt for an extra-thick, cushioned, non-slip mat to improve comfort and stability. Here's my top pick.
- Swiss Ball: A Swiss ball with a stability ring can add variety and challenge to your movements. <u>Here's my top pick.</u>

For Recovery:

- Reusable Gel Pack: Perfect for applying heat or cold therapy to your lower back after exercise. Here's my top pick.
- Massage Gun: A convenient tool for targeting hard-to-reach areas and easing tension. Here's my top pick.
- Soft Foam Roller: Gentle on muscles, helping to reduce the risk of uncomfortable spasms. Here's my top pick.
- Massage Ball: A versatile option for muscle relaxation, offering more precision than a tennis ball. Here's my top pick.

Enhance Your Experience with Our Private Facebook Group!



Take your journey to the next level by joining our exclusive Facebook community.

Here's what you'll get:

- <u>Exclusive Videos</u>: Access extra content to support your progress.
- <u>Community Support</u>: Interact with other motivated participants to share tips, experiences, and encouragement.
- <u>Live Sessions with Me</u>: Get your questions answered in real-time during regular live Q&A sessions.

Don't miss this chance to stay inspired, connect with others, and maximize your results—join our private Facebook group today!



Click here to join the private Facebook group

Before You Begin

Back pain can be complex, and **if not addressed properly, some actions might make it worse.**

To ensure your safety and success, please follow these three recommendations:

- 1. Some conditions require **urgent medical attention**. If you experience any of the following symptoms, seek medical help immediately:
 - Pain following a severe trauma
 - Constant, progressive pain that isn't influenced by movement (nonmechanical pain)
 - Severe chest or abdominal pain
 - Persistent, unrelenting pain at night
 - Unexplained weight loss
 - Numbness around the genital area (saddle anesthesia)
 - Recent onset of urinary or bowel incontinence
- 2. Severe back pain? Manage your symptoms first.

If your pain is intense, it's best to address it before starting any exercise program. Treatments like medication, massage, heat, or ice can help. Consult a healthcare professional to find the right approach if your pain prevents you from moving.

3. No improvement? Seek professional guidance.

If the exercises don't lead to progress over time, it might mean they're not suited to your specific condition or are being performed incorrectly. A professional can help you adapt and refine your approach.

Once we've ruled out any serious issues requiring medical consultation, you're ready to start the program safely!

Introduction to Breathing and Lumbar Stability



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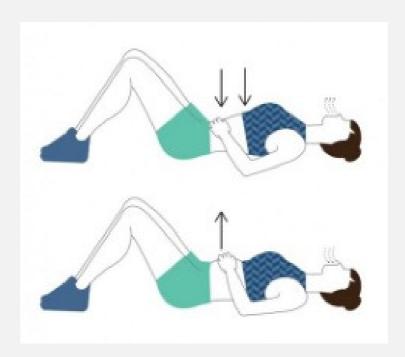
Today's motivation

"The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."

Dan Millman

Exercise 1: Diaphragmatic Breathing

- 1. Lie on your back (preferably in a calming environment). Bend your knees and use a cushioned exercise mat for added comfort.
- 2. Place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen. The hand on your chest should remain still, as the focus is on abdominal movement.
- 3. Inhale deeply through your nose, allowing your belly to expand like a balloon.
- 4. At the end of the deep inhale, hold your breath for 2 seconds.
- 5. Slowly exhale through your mouth until all the air is released.
- 6. Repeat this exercise 10 times, taking it slow and steady.



Exercise 2: Pelvic Tilt and Neutral Position

- 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent.
- 2. Arch your lower back as if someone is trying to slide their hand underneath it. This creates a hollow space in the lower back, known as anterior pelvic tilt.
- 3. Perform the opposite movement by pressing your lower back firmly against the ground. This is called **posterior pelvic tilt** (or retroversion).
- 4. Once you're comfortable with both extreme positions of the pelvis, try to find the middle position between anterior and posterior tilt. This is referred to as the **neutral pelvic position**.
- 5. Repeat this process 20 times, moving smoothly and with control.





If the exercises felt too easy, don't worry the difficulty will increase progressively. For everyone else, keep moving forward at your own pace.

Exercise 3: Isometric Glute Contraction

- 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent.
- 2. Squeeze your glutes firmly and press your heels into the floor (without lifting your pelvis).
- 3. Hold the glute contraction for **5 seconds**.
- 4. Repeat 20 times, ensuring each contraction is controlled and strong.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- Breathing and Back Pain: Research shows that individuals with lower back pain often breathe differently compared to those without pain. They rely less on their diaphragm and tend to use shallow breathing, which reduces oxygen delivery to tissues.
- Benefits of Slow Breathing: Slow, deep breathing has numerous benefits, including improved oxygenation of tissues, enhanced blood circulation, and increased efficiency of the cardio-respiratory system.
- Neutral Pelvic Position: Maintaining a neutral pelvis can theoretically reduce stress on the lower back while preserving the spine's natural curvature.
- Effectiveness of Isometric Contractions: Isometric contractions are particularly useful when pain is present, as they involve muscle activation without moving the joints, minimizing discomfort.

Controlled Breathing and Core Strength



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Today's motivation

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts." Winston Churchill

Exercise 1: Three-Stage Deep Breathing

- 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent (ideally in a relaxing environment).
- 2. Inhale through your nose, inflating your belly like a balloon. Continue the inhale by expanding your ribcage laterally. If you still have breath left, complete the inhale by lifting your chest.
- 3. Then **exhale slowly** through your mouth, following the reverse order (lower the sternum, retract the ribcage, and deflate the belly).
- 4. You can add a light weight on your belly to increase resistance.
- 5. Repeat 10 times, going slowly.



Exercise 2: Pelvic Tilt and Activation of the Transverse Abdominal Muscle

- 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent.
- 2. As you did the day before, arch your lower back by **creating a curve in the lumbar region** (anterior pelvic tilt). Increase the range of motion if possible.
- 3. Then, perform the opposite movement by **pressing your lower back** against the floor (posterior pelvic tilt).
- 4. Next, place your pelvis in a neutral position as instructed the day before.
- 5. Contract your transverse abdominal muscle by gently pulling your belly button toward the floor, while simultaneously holding back urine. Hold the contraction for 10 seconds.
- 6. Repeat the process 10 times.



Exercise 3: Bridge

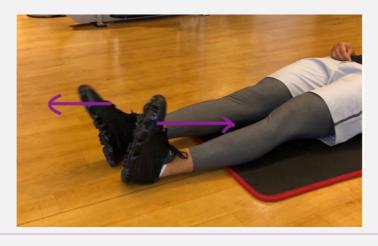
- 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent.
- 2. Contract your glutes as instructed the day before.
- 3. Continue the exercise by **lifting your pelvis off the floor**, pushing with your heels. Raise your torso as much as tolerated, without aggravating the pain.
- 4. Slowly lower your pelvis back down to the floor.
- 5. Repeat 15 times, taking breaks as needed



Bonus: Sciatic Nerve Neural Mobility

Note: Do this if your pain radiates down the back of your leg

- 1. Lie on your back with your legs extended.
- 2. In one smooth motion, point your right foot forward and bring the toes of your left foot toward you.
- 3. Then, reverse the movement (point your right foot toward you and your left foot forward).
- 4. Repeat these movements 20 times, moving slowly.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- According to some studies, the transverse abdominal muscle shows a
 delayed activation in people suffering from chronic low back pain. Since
 this muscle has a protective effect on the lumbar vertebrae, a delay in
 contraction can increase the risk of lower back pain.
- Non-weight-bearing exercises (i.e., those that minimize stress on the joints, such as lying on your back) **reduce stress on the vertebrae** and minimize the risk of injury.
- The bridge exercise is excellent for engaging the posterior chain (muscles at the back of the body, such as the hamstrings, glutes, spinal muscles, etc.).

Muscle Activation for a Resilient Back



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Today's motivation

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." Albert Einstein

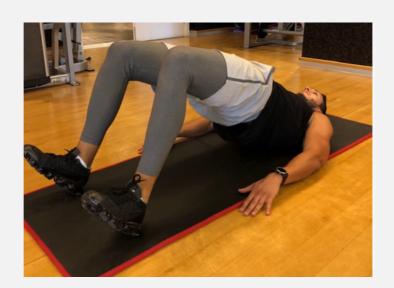
Exercise 1: Sahrmann 1

- 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent and use a padded exercise mat for comfort. Maintain a neutral pelvic position and engage your transverse abdominal muscle as taught yesterday.
- 2. Lift your right leg so that the right knee is brought towards you at a 90-degree angle. Hold for **3 seconds**, then slowly bring the foot back to the floor.
- 3. Repeat the same process with the left leg, ensuring you maintain the contraction of the transverse abdominal muscle.
- 4. Complete 10 repetitions for each leg.



Exercise 2: Bridge (Progression)

- 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent.
- 2. Contract your glutes (as explained in previous days).
- 3. Continue the exercise by lifting your pelvis off the floor while pushing through your heels. Hold the elevated position for **5 seconds** (longer than the previous days).
- 4. Slowly lower your pelvis back to the floor.
- 5. **Repeat 20 times**, taking breaks as needed (more repetitions than the previous days).



Exercise 3: Pelvic Tilt in Quadruped Position (On All Fours)

- 1. Start in a quadruped position (hands under shoulders, knees under hips). Keep your back straight and engage your transverse abdominal muscle by gently pulling your belly button in, as taught previously.
- 2. Keeping your arms straight and neck relaxed, perform the cat stretch by rounding your back. **Hold the position for 3 seconds**.
- 3. Then, perform the reverse movement: lift your head and arch your back, exaggerating the curve in your lower back. Squeeze your shoulder blades together while keeping your arms straight. **Hold for 3 seconds**, then return to the starting position.
- 4. Repeat the pelvic tilts 10 times each.



Bonus: Piriformis Stretch

Note: Do this stretch if your pain radiates down your leg.

- 1. Lie on your back.
- 2. **Cross the symptomatic leg** over so that the ankle is placed on the opposite knee.
- 3. Pull the non-symptomatic leg towards you. At this point, you should feel a stretch behind the symptomatic hip.
- 4. Hold the stretch for **30 seconds**, then repeat **3 times**, taking breaks between each set.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- It is important to train our muscles in various positions to mimic everyday activities.
- Progression in exercises can be achieved by increasing repetitions, the duration of the contraction, the speed of movement, etc.
- Since the sciatic nerve passes through the piriformis muscle, stretching this muscle can be beneficial in cases of sciatica.

Rejuvenate with Rest and Gentle Walking



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Today's motivation

"Challenges are what make life interesting, and overcoming them is what gives life meaning."
- Joshua J. Marine

Today is a rest day!

There are no exercises for today, giving your back some time to rest after the past few days of activity (and to prepare for the exercises coming up in the next days). However, it's highly recommended to take a **short walk** for about **15-20 minutes** to maintain a basic level of physical activity.

If walking is difficult, here are some tips to ensure you don't aggravate your symptoms:

- Take breaks to sit and rest your back, especially if pain increases during walking.
- Slow down your walking pace to reduce the impact on your spine and discs.
- Shorten your stride to minimize stress on your pelvis and lower back.
- Activate your transverse abdominal muscles (as we discussed) to engage stabilizing muscles and help reduce pain while walking.
- Adjust your posture by either leaning slightly forward or keeping your trunk upright—whatever feels more comfortable.
- Use diaphragmatic breathing (as we practiced) to help reduce pain and improve oxygenation of your muscles while walking.
- Wear supportive walking shoes to reduce the impact on your joints and spine.
- Avoid uneven or hard surfaces that may increase strain on your back and joints.
- Stick to flat and even terrain to avoid sudden movements or missteps that could worsen the pain.
- Consider using walking aids, such as walking poles or a cane, to improve balance and reduce strain on your back.

If walking is not possible at all, opt for a **relaxing activity with minimal movement**, like light gardening, a picnic, outdoor photography, painting, or stargazing. The goal is to **stay active** without pushing your body too hard.

Enjoy your rest day, and take care of your back!

The Science Behind the Exercises

- Relative rest can be beneficial for your back, especially after an acute flare-up (this is different from complete bed rest!).
- Walking helps reduce stress and anxiety, which are often associated with chronic pain, including back pain.
- Walking strengthens **postural muscles**, which helps stabilize and support the spine.
- In addition to its effects on the spine, walking can benefit cardiovascular, pulmonary, digestive, and mental health, contributing to overall well-being.

Building a Strong Foundation



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Today's motivation

"The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do." Walter Bagehot

Exercise 1: Sahrmann 1 (Progression)

- 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent. **Engage your transverse** abdominal muscle as taught.
- 2. Lift your right leg to bring your right knee towards you (at 90 degrees). Then, lower your right foot to the ground as slowly as possible.
- 3. Repeat the same process with the left leg.
- 4. Perform these movements for **15 repetitions per leg** (more repetitions than the previous day).



Exercise 2: Walking Bridge

- 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent.
- 2. Lift your hips off the floor by pushing through your heels.
- 3. While in this position, take small steps by **bringing your heels toward you** (towards your glutes).
- 4. Then, take small steps to move your heels away from your glutes, towards your feet.
- 5. Perform a total of **20 steps** (back-and-forth movements), taking **breaks** if needed.



Exercise 3: Pelvic Tilt and Transverse Activation in Quadruped Position

- **1.Start on all fours** (hands under the shoulders, knees under the hips). Keep your back straight. To reduce stress on your knees, use a cushioned exercise mat.
- 2. Round your back into the "cat position" (posterior pelvic tilt). Hold for 3 seconds.
- 3. Then, arch your back to **accentuate the curve** in your lower back (anterior pelvic tilt). Hold for **3 seconds**.
- 4. Find the neutral position of your pelvis, which is **halfway between** anterior and posterior pelvic tilt.
- 5. In this position, engage your transverse abdominal muscle by pulling your belly button toward your spine.
- 6. Hold the contraction for **10 seconds**, and repeat **10 times**.



Bonus: Nerve Flossing for Sciatica

Note: Do this if the pain radiates down the back of the leg.

- 1. Lie on your back with your legs extended.
- 2. Grab the symptomatic leg by placing your hands behind the thigh.
- 3.In one motion, pull your toes towards you and extend the leg towards the sky, to a point of tolerance. Hold for 3-5 seconds, then return the heel towards the thigh.
- 4. Perform the back-and-forth movement **20 times**, keeping your hands around the symptomatic thigh.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- Progressive overload of your muscles and tissues is the ultimate solution to strengthen your body and eliminate pain in the long term. In other words, this approach aims to gradually increase the intensity and complexity of exercises to strengthen the back muscles and improve movement tolerance, while avoiding pain flare-ups.
- Mobilizing the sciatic nerve through exercises (known as "nerve glides")
 can help reduce numbness and tingling sensations in the leg.

Glute Activation for a Healthy Spine



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Today's motivation

"Courage is not the absence of fear, but the ability to overcome what frightens us." Nelson Mandela

Exercise 1: Sahrmann 2

- 1. Lie on your back and **engage your transverse abdominal muscle** as instructed.
- 2. Keeping your **knee at a 90-degree angle**, lift both legs to bring your knees toward your chest.
- 3. In this position, **slide one leg down** until it is fully extended (or according to tolerance). The foot should glide against the floor at this stage.
- 4. Then, bring the extended leg back to the starting position and perform the same movement with the other leg.
- 5. Repeat these movements for 10-15 repetitions per leg.



Exercise 2: Walking Bridge (Progression)

- 1. Lie on your back.
- 2. Lift your hips off the ground while pushing through your heels. The progression is to keep your arms in the air (so they don't touch the floor).
- 3. In this position, take small steps to bring your heels toward you (toward your glutes).
- 4. Then, take small steps to move your heels away from your glutes.
- 5. Complete about 20 steps in total, taking breaks as needed.



Exercise 3: Hip Extension in Quadruped Position (on all fours)

- 1.Get into a **quadruped position** (hands under shoulders, knees under hips).
- 2. Find the neutral position (corresponding to the position of **the pelvis halfway between anterior** and posterior pelvic tilt, as taught).
- 3. From this position, **extend one leg backward**, ensuring to point the foot as far behind you as possible.
- 4. Slowly return to the starting position and repeat with the other leg.
- 5. Perform **10 repetitions per leg**.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- It is completely normal to experience occasional flare-ups of pain. This does not necessarily mean that your condition has worsened. Sometimes, it is simply a response of the nervous system to a specific situation (such as stress).
- When the pain becomes significant, it is important to consult with your doctor to clarify the diagnosis and determine if medication is needed. In the meantime, modalities such as heat or ice can help relieve symptoms in the short term.

Progress Check and Mindset Boost



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Today's motivation

"Every day is a new opportunity to change your life." -Anonymous No new exercises for today! Instead, take the opportunity to practice the exercises demonstrated so far that feel good and/or that you haven't yet mastered.

The science behind the exercises

 Choosing exercises and activities that bring us joy is essential for optimal healing. The journey is filled with challenges, and a positive attitude coupled with strong motivation is crucial to staying active despite back pain!

Unwind with Mindfulness Meditation



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Today's motivation

"The pain you feel today will be the strength you feel tomorrow." Anonymous Today's focus isn't on new exercises, but rather on introducing a **meditation practice** that can complement your recovery journey.

Mindfulness meditation is an excellent tool to reduce stress, increase awareness, and ease pain perception. Here's how you can get started:

- 1. Find a quiet space where you won't be disturbed during your session.
- 2. Get comfortable in a position that doesn't aggravate your pain. You can sit on a chair or lie on your back if that feels better.
- 3. Relax your gaze by either closing your eyes or focusing gently on a single point.
- 4. Pay full attention to your breath. Breathe naturally or use diaphragmatic breathing (which we've covered earlier in the program).
- 5. Let thoughts come and go. Don't try to block or control them. Simply return your focus to your breath after each thought passes.
- 6. Start small. Begin with just 3 minutes of mindfulness. If you find it helpful, try again on another day, adding a minute each time. Your goal for the short term is to reach 10 uninterrupted minutes.

This simple but powerful technique can help calm your mind, reduce muscle tension, and improve your overall sense of well-being. Give it a try!

The Science Behind the Exercises

- In addition to calming the mind, meditation has powerful physiological benefits that can aid the healing of your back. These include reducing stress, improving concentration, lowering blood pressure, enhancing sleep, and much more.
- One of the main goals of mindfulness meditation is to approach your thoughts with kindness and let them pass by without judgment. Try to take a step back from your thoughts, almost as if you were observing someone else.
- Mindfulness can also help reduce pain perception by changing the way your brain interprets pain signals. This shift can make the pain feel less intense over time.
- By practicing mindfulness, you can regulate your emotions, reducing impulsive reactions and fostering a calmer, more stable mindset. This compassionate, non-judgmental approach towards yourself can, in the long run, improve your self-esteem and emotional resilience.

Core Stability for a Stronger Back



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Today's motivation

"Don't look at the staircase, just look at each step. Our goal is not to see what is far ahead, but to take the next step." Martin Luther King Jr.

Exercise 1: Sahrmann 3

- 1. Lie on your back and engage your transverse abdominal muscle as previously taught.
- 2. Keeping your knee at a **90-degree angle**, lift both legs to bring your knees toward you.
- 3. In this position, **slide one leg down until it is fully extended**. Unlike Day 6, try to keep your foot off the ground without touching it.
- 4. Return the leg to the starting position and perform the same movement with the other leg.
- 5. Repeat these movements 10 times per leg.



Exercise 2: Bridge with Alternating Knee Extension

- 1. Lie on your back.
- 2. Lift your hips off the ground by pushing your feet against the floor.
- 3. While in the raised position, **extend one leg fully to straighten the knee**, maintaining the leg in full extension.
- 4. Slowly lower the extended leg back to the ground and **return to the starting position.**
- 5. Repeat the same sequence, this time lifting the other leg.
- 6. Perform about ten repetitions per leg. Take breaks as needed.



Exercise 3: Superman on All Fours

- 1.**Get into a quadruped position** (hands under shoulders, knees under hips). To reduce stress on your knees, use a cushioned exercise mat.
- 2. Find the neutral position of your pelvis, which is halfway between anterior and posterior pelvic tilt.
- 3. **Engage your transverse abdominal** muscle by pulling your belly button toward your spine.
- 4. In one motion, **extend your right leg** backward while raising your left arm towards the sky. Be sure to minimize trunk rotation during the movement.
- 5. Return slowly to the starting position. Then repeat by raising your left leg and right arm simultaneously.
- 6. Perform about ten repetitions per side.



Bonus: Sciatic Nerve Glides

Note: Perform if pain radiates down the back of the leg

- 1. Lie on your back and place a belt, towel, or similar object around the foot of the symptomatic leg.
- 2. Using your arms for support, **lift the leg toward you**, keeping it as straight as possible. Stop when you feel a comfortable tension at the back of the leg.
- 3. Slowly return to the starting position.
- 4. Repeat the movement for about fifteen repetitions.
- 5. Do not continue the exercise if you experience sharp pain, or if **numbness** or **tingling occurs**.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- Strengthening and promoting motor control of the abdominal muscles can help reduce excessive curvature in the lower back (called lumbar hyperlordosis).
- If an exercise is too painful, there are always alternatives or regressions that allow you to work without excessive pain.

Improve Balance and Stability with a Swiss Ball



Follow along with guided videos - click here to unlock

Today's motivation

"The only way to do great work is to love what you do." Steve Jobs **Note**: If you wish to purchase a **Swiss Ball** on Amazon (including a stability base for added safety), <u>check out the following link</u>.

By using this affiliate link, you support my work at no extra cost to you.

Exercise 1: Sahrmann 3 (progression)

- 1. Lie on your back and **engage your transverse abdominal muscle as** taught.
- 2. Lift both legs to bring your knees toward you (keeping them at 90 degrees).
- 3. In this position, slide one leg down until it is fully extended. If possible, try to keep the foot in the air **without touching the floor**, and go as slowly as possible.
- 4. Bring the leg back to the starting position, and repeat the same movement with the other leg.
- 5. Repeat these movements **15 times per leg** (unlike yesterday, where you did **10 repetitions per leg**).



Exercise 2: Bridge with Swiss Ball

Note: For safe and secure use of the Swiss ball, I recommend using a Swiss ball with a stability ring <u>like this one available on Amazon</u>.

If you don't have a Swiss ball, you can use your bed, a bench, a sturdy table, etc.

- 1. Lie on your back with your calves resting on the Swiss ball.
- 2. Lift your hips so that your body forms a straight line. Only your shoulder blades, calves, and heels should be in contact with the surface.
- 3. Hold for 3 seconds, then return to the starting position.
- 4. Repeat 10 times, making sure to keep your trunk as stable as possible.



Exercise 3: Sitting Position on Swiss Ball

For this exercise, it's really simple! If you have a Swiss ball at home or at work (I recommend one with a stability ring to minimize any risks), just sit on it for **about 20 minutes.**

Whether you're working, watching TV, browsing the internet, or reading your favorite book—it's up to you!



If you don't have a ball, no worries! Just sit WITHOUT any support. You can use a stool or simply avoid leaning your back against the backrest of a chair.

Bonus: Alternative for Seniors with Balance Issues

Note: Do this if you have balance problems and are not comfortable using the Swiss ball.

- 1. Place a **sturdy chair or stand near** a wall so you have support within reach if needed.
- 2. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart on a flat, stable surface.
- 3. Place one hand on the backrest of the chair or against the wall to help maintain your balance.
- 4. Slowly lift your left leg a few inches off the floor. The leg that remains on the ground can be slightly bent or kept straight.
- 5. Try to hold this position for a few seconds, starting with 5 seconds. Gradually increase the time you hold the position each day by adding a few seconds to each exercise. The goal is to hold for 20 to 30 seconds on one leg.
- 6. Then repeat the exercise by lifting your right leg.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- The Swiss ball promotes the improvement of balance and proprioception, which helps strengthen the deep muscles of the back and prevent injuries.
- The instability of the Swiss ball during exercises forces the core muscles to continuously work synergistically to maintain balance, thus enhancing spinal stability.
- Regular use of the Swiss ball can help improve neuromuscular coordination, allowing for better control of movements and a reduction in the risk of improper movements.
- Some scientific studies have shown that older adults with lower back pain have significantly reduced balance performance compared to their healthy peers.
- Stability and balance exercises improve proprioception, allowing for better movement control and reducing the risk of falls in older adults.
- By working on balance, older adults can develop greater confidence in their physical abilities, thereby reducing anxiety related to movement and potential falls.

Introduction to Safe Twisting Movements



Follow along with guided videos - click here to unlock

Today's motivation

"Regardless of how slowly you go, as long as you do not stop."

Confucius

Exercise 1: Dead Bug Exercise

- 1. Lie on your back and bring both legs to 90 degrees as shown below.
- 2. In one motion, extend your left leg and right arm, bringing them as close to the ground as possible (you can place them on the floor if needed).
- 3. Slowly return to the starting position, and repeat with your right leg and left arm.
- 4. Repeat these movements 10 times per leg.



Exercise 2: Pelvic Tilt on Swiss Ball

Note: For safe and secure use of the Swiss Ball, I recommend a Swiss Ball with a stability ring <u>like this one available on Amazon</u>.

If you don't have a ball, simply sit WITHOUT SUPPORT. You can use a stool or simply avoid resting your back against the backrest of a chair.

- 1. Sit on a Swiss Ball (or an alternative).
- 2. Lower your torso to tilt your pelvis backward (posterior pelvic tilt). Hold this position for **3 seconds**.
- 3. Then, **arch your back to stand as tall as possible** (anterior pelvic tilt). Hold this position for **3 seconds** as well.
- 4. Repeat the back-and-forth movement for 15 repetitions.



Exercise 3: Active Lumbar Twist

- 1. Lie on your back and **bend your knees to 90 degrees**. Your feet should be flat on the floor.
- 2. Keeping your knees and ankles close together, actively bring your knees to the right, then gently rotate them to the left (like windshield wipers).
- 3. Once you reach the end of the movement, you can apply light pressure with your hand for **5 seconds** to feel a mild stretch along your side.
- 4. Repeat the back-and-forth movement for 15 repetitions.



Bonus: Alternative for Seniors with Balance Issues

Note: Do this if you have balance problems and are not comfortable with the Swiss ball.

- 1. Sit on a stable chair with your **feet flat on the floor**.
- 2. Slide forward slightly so your back is not resting against the back of the chair. Then, place your arms in front of you, with your hands together.
- 3. **Slowly rotate your upper body** to the right. Hold this position for 3 seconds. Slowly return to the starting position with your arms still in front of you.
- 4. Then, slowly rotate your upper body to the left. Hold this position for 3 seconds. Slowly return to the starting position with your arms still in front of you.
- 5. Repeat these rotational movements (right and left) a total of 20 times.





The science behind the exercises

- It might be best to begin trunk twisting exercises once you've mastered movements in the forward-backward plane (known as the sagittal plane).
- Lumbar twisting movements improve **spinal flexibility**, helping you move more smoothly and **reducing the risk of injuries** caused by stiffness.
- Practicing these twisting motions also prepares your body for everyday activities that require trunk rotations, such as turning to pick something up or engaging in sports.

Unlock Flexibility and Relaxation with Stretching



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Today's motivation

"Happiness doesn't depend on who you are or what you have; it depends solely on what you think."

Dale Carnegie

Today is a 100% stretching day!

Stretch 1: Passive Lumbar Twist

- 1. Lie on your back with your legs extended.
- 2. In a twisting motion, extend your right arm to the side, and **bring your** right leg over to the left side (as shown).
- 3. Using your left arm, apply gentle pressure to your right thigh to increase the stretch in the twist (according to your tolerance).
- 4. You should feel a stretch in your right side, glute, and the outer part of your right leg. Hold the stretch for **30 seconds**, take a short break, and then **repeat for 3 sets**.
- 5. Perform the same stretch on the opposite side.



Stretch 2: Psoas Stretch in Knight's Position

- 1.Get into the **knight's position** as shown. Your right leg should be forward, with your left knee on the floor. If needed, place a pillow under your left knee for support.
- 2. Move your pelvis forward while keeping your back straight, until you feel a stretch at the top of your left thigh.
- 3. Hold the stretch for about **30 seconds**, take a short break, and repeat for **3 sets.**
- 4. Then, perform the stretch on the opposite side.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- Stretching certain key muscles can reduce the stress on the lumbar vertebrae, thus decreasing back pain.
- Regular stretching as part of back pain rehabilitation can help **improve** muscle flexibility, reducing stiffness and tension in the lumbar region.
- Targeted stretches can help release contracted or tight muscles, promoting muscle relaxation and reducing spasms that may worsen back pain symptoms.
- Studies on stretching in back pain rehabilitation are not unanimous regarding their effectiveness. However, if benefits are felt during practice, stretching is highly recommended.

Build Core Strength with Planks



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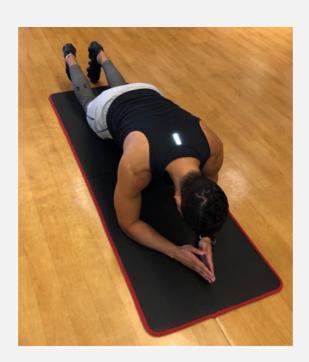
Today's motivation

"Never let a bad situation make you believe you have a bad life."

Anonymous

Exercise 1: Plank (on knees)

- 1. Lie flat on your stomach on the floor. To reduce stress on your elbows and knees, use a padded exercise mat.
- 2. Lift your torso so that your body is **supported only by your feet**, knees, and forearms. If you don't have an appropriate exercise mat, you can place a pillow under your knees for added comfort.
- 3. Hold the position for about **10 seconds** (or as tolerated).
- 4. Return to the starting position and repeat the sequence about 10 times.



Exercise 2: Hip Flexion on a Swiss Ball

Note: To avoid the risk of falling, ensure there is a sturdy surface nearby. For added safety, consider using a Swiss ball with a stability base <u>like this one</u>.

If you're not comfortable with a Swiss ball, use a stool or a chair (without leaning your back against the backrest).

- 1. Sit on a Swiss ball, **maintaining an upright posture**. Your feet should rest firmly on the ground.
- 2. Lift your right leg toward the ceiling, **keeping the knee bent** at a 90-degree angle. Hold the leg up for **5 seconds**.
- 3. Lower your foot back to the ground and repeat the sequence with the other leg.
- 4. Perform 10 repetitions per leg.



Exercise 3: Forward Lunge

- 1. Stand with one leg positioned in front of the other (**right leg forward and left leg back**).
- 2. While keeping your torso stable, lower yourself toward the ground by bending both knees.
- 3. Return to the starting position.
- 4. Perform **10 repetitions**, taking breaks as needed, and ensure there is no knee pain during the movement. **Keep your torso as stable as possible** throughout.
- 5. Repeat the sequence with the opposite leg in the forward position.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- If lower back pain is severe, prioritize core-strengthening exercises like planks. These exercises help **stabilize the torso**, while movements like sit-ups can increase pressure on the intervertebral discs.
- Planks engage the abdominals, obliques, and back muscles at the same time, offering balanced and comprehensive support for the spine.
- Consistently practicing core-strengthening exercises boosts your ability to tolerate exercise and perform daily activities without worsening pain.

Strong Legs, Strong Back: A Key to Pain Relief



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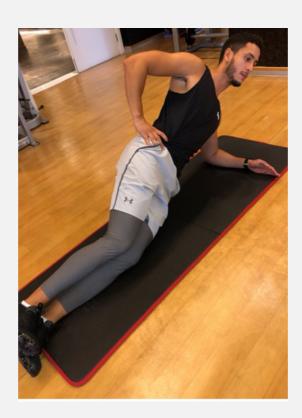
Today's motivation

"You cannot change the winds, but you can adjust your sails."

Aristotle

Exercise 1: Side Plank (Kneeling)

- 1. Lie on your **left side on the floor**. Use a padded exercise mat for added comfort.
- 2. Lift your torso so that you are supported only by your left knee, foot, and forearm. If you experience shoulder discomfort, place your right hand on the floor for additional support.
- 3. Hold the position for 10 seconds (or as tolerated).
- 4. Return to the starting position and repeat the sequence 10 times.
- 5. Switch sides and repeat the sequence on your right side.

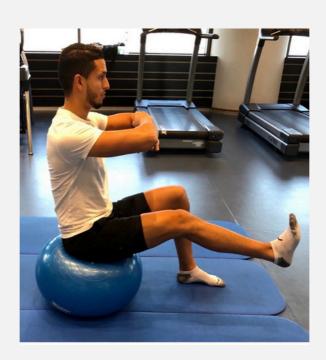


Exercise 2: Knee Extension on a Swiss Ball

Note: To minimize the risk of falling, position yourself near a sturdy surface. For added safety, consider using a Swiss ball with a stability ring.

If you're uncomfortable using a Swiss ball, opt for a stool or chair (without leaning your back against the backrest).

- 1. Sit on a Swiss ball (or alternative) with your back straight.
- 2. Extend your right leg upward, keeping the knee fully straight. Hold the position for 5 seconds.
- 3. Lower your foot back to the ground and repeat the movement with your left leg.
- 4. Perform 10 repetitions per leg.



Exercise 3: Walking Lunges

- 1. Stand up and make sure there is enough space in front of you.
- 2. Take a large step forward with your right leg, bending your knees to lower your body into a lunge position while keeping your torso upright and stable.
- 3. Push yourself back up and bring your left foot to the same level as your right foot, or return to the starting position if there is not enough space.
- 4. Now, take a large step forward with your left leg and lower your body into a lunge position.
- 5. **Push yourself back up** and bring your right foot to the same level as your left foot, or return to the starting position.
- 6. Repeat the sequence, alternating legs, and either moving forward or staying in place depending on available space.
- 7. Perform 10 steps per leg, taking breaks as needed.



The Science Behind the Exercises

- Strengthening your leg muscles helps prevent strain on your back. For example, by bending your knees instead of constantly bending your trunk when picking something up off the floor, you reduce the stress on your lower back.
- Strong thigh and glute muscles also enhance pelvic stability, which is crucial for supporting your spine and preventing back pain.
- Improving the strength of your lower limbs helps absorb shocks and impacts more effectively, reducing the force that is transmitted to your back and lowering your risk of injury.

Advanced Core Strength and Lumbar Stability



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Today's motivation

"Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will." Samuel Johnson

Exercise 1: Plank

- 1. Lie face down on the floor.
- 2. Lift your torso so that you are supported only by your feet and forearms. Ideally, **your knees should be off the floo**r (unlike Day 13).
- 3. Hold the position for **10 seconds** (or as tolerated).
- 4. Return to the starting position, and repeat the sequence 10 times.



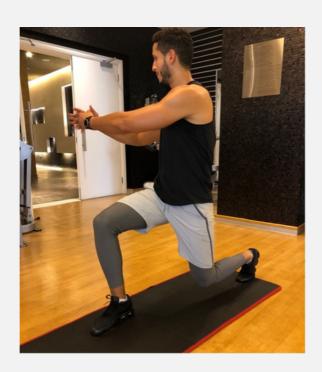
Exercise 2: Bear Plank

- 1. Get on all fours (hands under the shoulders, knees under the hips).
- 2. Find the **neutral position of your pelvis**, halfway between anterior and posterior pelvic tilt as instructed.
- 3. In one smooth movement, **push with your arms** and lift both knees off the ground simultaneously.
- 4. Hold the position for **10 seconds** (or as tolerated), then return to the starting position.
- 5. Repeat the movement 10 times.



Exercise 3: Walking Lunges with Rotation

- 1. **Stand up straight**, ensuring there is enough space in front of you.
- 2. Take a big step forward with your right leg.
- 3. At the same time, **bend your knees** to get into a lunge position.
- 4. Once in position, bring your hands together in front of you with your arms extended. Rotate to the right, then to the left, before returning to a neutral position.
- 5. Next, lift your body and bring your back leg forward so it's level with your front leg.
- 6. Now, take a big step forward with your left leg.
- 7. Repeat the sequence, alternating between lunges and bilateral rotations as you move forward.
- 8. Perform **10 steps**, taking breaks if necessary.



The science behind the exercises

- Your symptom improvement may plateau after a few weeks. Similar to weight loss, it usually takes more effort after a certain period to continue seeing progress.
- Progress can be influenced by other factors such as stress, sleep quality, and nutrition. A holistic approach (like this program) that considers these aspects can enhance results.
- Documenting your progress, such as **keeping a journal**, can help identify pain triggers and adjust exercises accordingly.

Relieving Lower Back Pain with Cardio



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Today's motivation

"It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves."

Edmund Hillary

The goal of the day is to engage in cardiovascular activity.

Essentially, you need to find an activity that will raise your heart rate and make you sweat, without worsening your lower back pain.

Whether it's **brisk walking**, **swimming**, **cycling**, or using an elliptical machine, choose an activity that will get you **moving in a safe environment!**

The science behind the exercises

- Cardiovascular exercises have been shown to positively impact lower back pain while improving overall health. They help desensitize overactive nerves and stimulate blood circulation, which can contribute to reducing pain.
- Regular cardio activity promotes the **release of endorphins**, which are natural painkillers that help reduce pain perception and improve mood.
- By increasing heart rate and boosting blood circulation, cardiovascular exercises ensure that more oxygen and nutrients are delivered to the muscles and tissues, aiding the healing and recovery process.

Unlock Your Hips to Ease Your Back Pain



Get started with the hip mobility routine by clicking the image or this link.

Today's motivation

"The most beautiful moment is the one you have yet to live." Anonymous Today, we will focus on the mobility of your spine and hips.

Good back health means that our muscles are flexible enough and our joints are able to move safely in different planes.

The science behind the exercises

- Improved flexibility and mobility in the hips help distribute movement more evenly between the lower back and hips, reducing pressure on the lumbar spine.
- Increased hip range of motion makes functional movements like bending or squatting easier, decreasing the strain on your back.
- Flexible hips contribute to a smoother, more natural gait, which helps reduce mechanical stress on the spine.

Building Strength for a Resilient Spine



Start the strengthening routine by clicking the image or this link.

Today's motivation

"Success is falling seven times, getting up eight."

Japanese Proverb

After focusing on mobility the day before, it's also important to strengthen the muscles that support the spine and stabilize the lumbar vertebrae.

Whether it's the abdominal muscles or other core muscles, building strength is crucial to prevent recurring injuries.

The science behind the exercises

- Strengthening the abdominal and core muscles is essential for **effectively** supporting the spine and stabilizing the lumbar vertebrae.
- By developing core strength, overall posture is improved, reducing the risks of back pain and injury.
- A spine well-supported by strong muscles is less likely to be injured during sudden movements or intense physical activities.

Key Elements for a Balanced Back



Watch our 'integration routine' by clicking the image or this link.

Today's motivation

"Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet."

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

The ultimate step is to integrate into your routine all the elements we've discussed over the past weeks.

Whether it's **mobility**, **muscle flexibility**, joint and nerve suppleness, **control**, or **stability**, all of these elements contribute to **optimal back health**.

Food Choices to Eliminate Back Pain



Follow along with guided videos - click here to unlock

Today's motivation

"There is a force more powerful than steam, electricity, and atomic energy: the will." Albert Einstein Today is **Rest Day**: Focus on an Anti-Inflammatory Diet!

Take a break from physical activity and shift your focus to nourishing your body with foods that reduce inflammation.

Here's your simple goal : include at least one meal today that's rich in antiinflammatory ingredients.

Some top choices to add to your plate are:

- Turmeric
- Ginger
- Garlic
- Fatty fish
- Olive oil
- Bell peppers
- Mushrooms
- Avocado
- Broccoli
- Green tea
- Grapes
- Dark chocolate (in moderation!)

At the same time, try to avoid or limit pro-inflammatory foods like fried items, fast food, sugary treats, and alcohol.

Enjoy experimenting with flavors while giving your body the nutrients it needs to recover and heal.

Bon appétit!

The Science Behind an Anti-Inflammatory Diet

- According to some studies, an **anti-inflammatory diet** may promote **optimal healing** of your back by reducing overall inflammation.
- Essentially, you should focus on foods that have anti-inflammatory properties.
- On the other hand, limit processed foods, added sugars, and saturated fats to reduce systemic inflammation and improve the health of your back.
- Don't forget that proper hydration is essential for maintaining the health of your intervertebral discs, lubricating the spinal joints, and preventing muscle fatigue.

Overall Assessment for Renewed Back Health



Follow along with guided videos - click here to unlock

Today's motivation

"Keep moving forward no matter what. One day, the pain will disappear, and what will remain is your pride and determination." Anonymous

Final Day: Reflect and Celebrate Your Progress!

Congratulations on making it to the end of the program! Your perseverance, determination, and belief in your ability to heal have brought you here. **Be proud of your efforts!**

Here are some key takeaways from the past three weeks:

- Perseverance Pays Off: You stayed committed, facing pain head-on with courage and determination.
- Convenience is Key: The exercises required minimal equipment, making it easy to practice anywhere, anytime.
- Safe and Gradual Progression: Each movement was thoughtfully designed to ease your symptoms and help you progress without worsening your pain.
- A Holistic Approach: The program included everything your back needs—mobility, stability, strength, flexibility, control, relaxation—and even breathing, cardio, meditation, and nutrition.
- Balanced Healing: You learned to find a balance between rest during painful episodes and therapeutic exercises for long-term improvement.
- **Proactive Mindset**: True healing comes from taking charge of your recovery and adopting positive, consistent habits.

Now, take a moment to reflect on what you've learned and how far you've come. What stood out the most? What impact has this program had on your life?

I would love to hear about your experience and thoughts. Your feedback not only helps me improve but inspires others to take charge of their recovery too. Thank you for trusting me on this journey—this is just the beginning of your healthier, stronger future!



Click here to read testimonials from other participants and share your own experience with the 21-Day Back Pain Program.

Conclusion: Maintaining Good Habits

Congratulations on Completing the 21-Day Back Pain Program!

You've reached the finish line, and that's a huge accomplishment!

Whether you were new to the idea of using exercise to treat back pain or felt held back by discomfort, I hope you've seen the positive changes this program can bring.

This 21-day journey has laid the foundation for you to take control of your back health and improve your daily life. But as rewarding as completing the program is, it's important to know that lasting relief often requires a longer commitment.

They say it takes 21 days to form a habit, but it takes 90 days to turn that habit into a lifestyle. To ensure you maintain your progress and continue improving, it's crucial to keep up the momentum.

This isn't the end—it's the start of a healthier, stronger you! Keep moving forward, and remember that consistency is key to long-term success.

Resources

- If you have benefited from this program, make sure to visit our website. It has been specifically designed to help you overcome your back pain and stay active despite the discomfort.
- If you haven't already, subscribe to <u>our YouTube channel</u> for exclusive exercise videos. Mobility, strengthening, stretching everything you need to get (back) into sports despite back pain.
- <u>Join our community on Facebook</u> to benefit from the support of a caring and motivating group. I regularly post useful information to help alleviate your pain on a daily basis.
- Looking for personalized coaching? Our team helps motivated individuals who want to overcome their pain, stay active, and live a fulfilling life.
- To find out if you're eligible, fill out the following form and a member of our team will contact you.

Access the eligibility form for individual coaching

About Lumbafit

Lumbafit is an **online platform** dedicated to helping you stay active, even when dealing with physical pain. We believe that movement is the key to managing back pain and improving your overall quality of life.

Our platform offers exercise sessions designed to strengthen muscles, enhance mobility, and reduce pain—all under the guidance of qualified healthcare professionals.

At Lumbafit, we strive to create a supportive and motivating community where members feel encouraged on their journey to an active, pain-free life. In addition to our exercise sessions, we also offer personalized coaching programs and one-on-one support for those who need more targeted assistance.

We're committed to providing high-quality, accessible information to help our community understand their conditions and make informed health decisions.

Our mission is to empower you to live your life fully, without being held back by pain.



Legal Disclaimer

The information and advice provided in this program are for informational purposes only and do not replace professional medical advice. Always consult a healthcare professional before starting any exercise program, especially if you have a history of back problems or other medical conditions. The author and distributors of this program cannot be held responsible for any injury or damage resulting from the use of this program. By following this program, you agree to do so at your own risk.