

# EXERCISES FOR THE SPINE

## THE MOST IMPORTANT EXERCISES FOR A HEALTHY BACK

**Neck exercises**

These neck exercises are designed to strengthen the neck muscles and improve posture. They are performed by standing upright with feet shoulder-width apart. The first exercise involves raising the right hand to the head and tilting the head to the left. The second exercise involves raising both hands to the head and tilting the head forward. The third exercise involves raising both hands to the head and tilting the head to the right.

**Shoulder girdle 1**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the shoulder girdle muscles and improve posture. They are performed by standing upright with feet shoulder-width apart. The first exercise involves raising the right arm to the side and the left arm to the front. The second exercise involves raising both arms to the sides.

**Shoulder girdle 2**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the shoulder girdle muscles and improve posture. They are performed by standing upright with feet shoulder-width apart. The first exercise involves raising the right arm to the side and the left arm to the front. The second exercise involves raising both arms to the sides.

**Clavical exercises 1**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the clavical muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right leg and the left arm. The second exercise involves lifting the left leg and the right arm.

**Clavical exercises 2**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the clavical muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right leg and the left arm. The second exercise involves lifting the left leg and the right arm.

**Arm, chest and shoulder exercises**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the arm, chest, and shoulder muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right arm and the left leg. The second exercise involves lifting the left arm and the right leg.

**Back exercises 1**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the back muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right leg and the left arm. The second exercise involves lifting the left leg and the right arm.

**Back exercises 2**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the back muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right leg and the left arm. The second exercise involves lifting the left leg and the right arm.

**Back exercises 3**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the back muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right leg and the left arm. The second exercise involves lifting the left leg and the right arm.

**Back exercises 4**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the back muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right leg and the left arm. The second exercise involves lifting the left leg and the right arm.

**Lateral body exercises**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the lateral body muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the side with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right leg and the left arm. The second exercise involves lifting the left leg and the right arm.

**Straight abdominal exercises**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the straight abdominal muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right leg and the left arm. The second exercise involves lifting the left leg and the right arm.

**Diagonal abdominal exercises**

These exercises are designed to strengthen the diagonal abdominal muscles and improve posture. They are performed by lying on the back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The first exercise involves lifting the right leg and the left arm. The second exercise involves lifting the left leg and the right arm.

These exercises are designed to strengthen the muscles of the spine and improve posture. They are performed by standing upright with feet shoulder-width apart. The first exercise involves raising the right hand to the head and tilting the head to the left. The second exercise involves raising both hands to the head and tilting the head forward. The third exercise involves raising both hands to the head and tilting the head to the right.



## Exercise for the Spine

- Exercise will increase the blood flow to the back, bringing needed oxygen and nutrients and washing away toxic metabolites.
- Exercise will strengthen the muscles around the spine, helping to take the pressure off of the bones and other static structures in the back.
- Exercise will help maintain flexibility, which will help prevent tight muscles that pull and torque the spine.
- Exercise will help maintain a healthy weight. Excess weight can lead to worsening back pain and leg pain.
- Staying active helps with emotional and mental health as well. Getting up and moving gets the blood and endorphins flowing and improves one's overall outlook, which in turn helps reduce pain and improve physical symptoms.

**Prone Arm/Leg Raises**—Lie on stomach keeping neck in line with straight legs, and arms outstretched overhead.

- Slowly raise and lower each arm and leg, one at a time
- 5 repetitions on each limb
- Work alternate limbs by lifting right arm and left leg at the same time
- 5 repetitions; change to work reverse pair



**Arm/Leg Raises**—This exercise is similar to the prone arm/leg raises, except done with hands and knees on the floor, with hands directly under shoulders and knees directly under hips.

- To work *arms*, slowly straighten the right arm, reaching forward and keeping neck and back straight,
- Hold 5 seconds; slowly lower arm to starting position
- 3-5 repetitions on each side
- To work *legs*, slowly straighten leg without arching back, extending the leg behind the body
- Hold 5 seconds; slowly return to starting position
- 3-5 repetitions on each side
- To work *alternate pairs of limbs*, raising the right arm and left leg at the same time
- Hold position for 5 seconds
- 3-5 repetitions; change to work reverse pair

**Cat Curls**—Get down on all-fours with knees and hands on the floor with back and neck in a neutral, straight position

- Slowly tighten lower abdominals, rounding the back towards the ceiling
- Hold for 5 seconds
- Release and return to neutral position
- Arch the back slightly
- Hold for 5 seconds
- Release and return to neutral position



**Water Exercise/Knee-to-Chest**—Stand with right hand holding on to side of pool

- Raise left knee slowly to 90 degree angle
- Grab behind left knee with left hand and slowly bring knee up into chest
- Hold 5 seconds
- 3-5 repetitions per side

**Exercise Ball/Back Extensions**—Lay over the **exercise ball** on stomach with legs straight and feet flexed to be up on toes; rest hands on side of ball, but do not use arms to push up

- Slowly lift head and chest off ball (do not strain or overextend)
- Hold for 5 seconds
- Return to starting position



- 3-5 repetitions