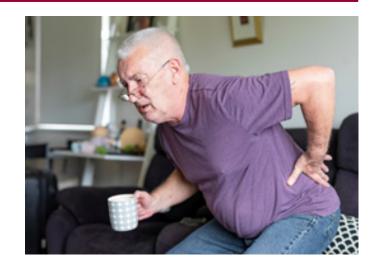# Take Back Your Back!

Exercises to help relieve pain and strengthen your back. Back pain is no fun, but it can be helped by stretching your back and legs and strengthening your core. While it is quite a common issue for older adults, there are plenty of good exercises you can do to take back your back! Here are five exercises to fight back pain:

Seated gentle backbend

This exercise strengthens your spinal extensors, neck muscles and pectorals.

Here is how you can perform seated gentle backbend:

1. Start seated in a chair and rest your hands on your lower back.
2. Press your hands into your lower back and inhale.
3. Hold for five deep breaths and return to start.

Perform 3-5 times.

Bent knee raise

This exercise strengthens abs, lower back and practices using your core for stability.

Here is how you can perform a bent knee raise:

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent.
2. Lift your knees one at a time toward your chest.
3. Hold for five seconds and return to start.

Perform 8-10 times.

Seated twist

This exercise strengthens back extensors while engaging your core.

Here is how you can perform seated twists:

1. Sit on the floor with your left leg extended and right leg bent so your knee is up.
2. Cross your right leg over the left by placing your foot down on the floor.
3. Place your right hand on the ground behind you and place your left elbow outside of your right knee, turning to look over your right shoulder.

Perform for 30-60 seconds each side.

Bridging

This exercise strengthens back, hip flexors, buttock muscles and hamstrings.

Here is how you can perform the bridge:

1. Lie on the floor with your knees bent.

2. Lift your bottom as high as comfortable off the floor.

3. Pause and return to start.

Perform 8-10 times.

Hip Flexion

This exercise stretches and extends the lower back muscles.

Here is how you perform hip flexions:

1. Start by positioning yourself on your hands and knees.

2. Slowly move your hips back and straight as possible.

3. Then slowly return to starting position.

Perform 8-10 times.

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