



Physical Therapy Saint Helena
Injury Rehabilitation & Prevention by Paul Wiesner

How to Help Low Back Pain in 6 Simple Steps.

1. Avoid sitting for more than 20 minutes at a time. Our bodies crave movement, and while healthy individuals are recommended to get up every hour, when we heal we need to feed that movement requirement more frequently.
2. Heat and ice are both effective at reducing pain. Do not use for more than 15 minutes. Unfortunately, neither will help with the healing process directly, but they can be helpful to help one sleep, which is when we heal the most.
3. Walk. Walking upright and taking long strides increases blood flow to musculature required to maintain stability of our low back. Improving the proper muscular contraction of these muscles reduces muscular spasms.
4. Easy exercises. Stretching can feel good, but sometimes it can make things worse, especially if you are trying to stretch a muscle that is "tight". Instead of stretching, movement exercises help to bring blood flow to the injury to allow the muscle to relax.

Two easy exercises are:

- a. Single knee to chest. Lie on your back with your knees bent. Using your hands, pull one knee to your chest and then lower it back down. Do 15-20 repetitions on each leg. Do this 2-3 times per day.
 - b. Abdominal bracers. Lie on your back with your knees bent. Tighten your abdominal muscles by hissing like a snake. This activates the deepest of your abdominal muscles, which acts as a corset, stabilizing your spine. Once you feel the activation of the muscle, you can then practice activating them without hissing. Hold the tightness for 10 seconds and do ten repetitions. Do this 2-3 times per day.
5. Avoid lifting heavy objects. If you must, be sure to bend your knees and activate your abdominal muscles the same way as the exercise.
 6. Lastly, but not least, talk to your physical therapist if you need any further help or have any questions.

Joint Napa Valley Physical Therapy

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