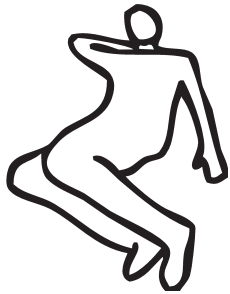


Stretches For Your Back

For mid-back and low-back pain, try these. You'll get the best results if you repeat them several times a day.

If you feel any of these movements are difficult because of tension, let your massage therapist know you would like to work on releasing that area at your next session. If you experience pain with any of these stretches, discuss with your physician before continuing.



1. **Knee drop.** Lie on your back with your knees bent, keeping your feet flat on the floor. Keep both shoulders relaxed and flat against the floor. Let your knees drop to one side only as far as they will go comfortably. Relax there for a few seconds and then bring them up again. Repeat on the other side, up to five times on each side. If your neck is uncomfortable flat against the floor, use a hand or pillow to support the back of your head.
2. **Side bend.** Stand with your feet together, your heels about two inches from a wall. Lean back and rest your back flat against the wall. Bend to the left, stretching your arm down one leg as far as it will go, keeping your entire back and head against the wall. Gently straighten up. Repeat 3 times to the left, then repeat the sequence to the right 3 times.
3. **Knee lift.** Lie down with knees bent, feet flat on the floor. Press your low back into the floor. Raise your left knee up to your chest as far as possible without pain. Hold for 5 seconds. Return the foot to the floor and slide heel forward until leg is straight. Now gently roll the leg from side to side and return to starting position. Do 5 times and switch legs.
4. If you can't lie down, try #3 sitting up. Sit in a chair with your back straight. Pull your right knee toward your chest. Hold for 5 seconds. Release. Repeat the exercise at least 5 times with each leg.