

Tips for a Healthy Back Outside of Work

Work is not the only place that our back is at risk. As a result, we need to make sure we take care of our back when we are having fun outside of work. Here are some tips that will hopefully help you enjoy your leisure time safely.

Hazards in your day to day life that you should be aware of.

1. Lifting children up from the floor when you are sitting in a chair is one of the most dangerous lifts you can do.

This style of lift puts more strain on the discs in your back than any other type of lift.

Solution – Get out of the chair, squat down and lift using your legs.

2. Holding and carrying loads in an asymmetrical fashion (children on one hip or a golf bag on one shoulder) can cause strain to the muscles in your back.

Any action that places uneven strain on your back is cause for concern.

Solution 1 – Push your child in a stroller instead of carrying them. Or if you must carry them, get a backpack style carrier.

Solution 2 – Use a carrier and push your golf bag with the carrier positioned in the middle of your body. Or, purchase one of the new backpack style golf bags with the automatic stand.

3. Beginning any physical activity without stretching.

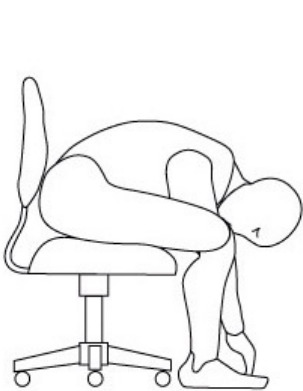
Beginning any physical activity without stretching and warming up is just asking for injuries.

Solution – Complete a short run or warm up session to get your blood flowing and then stretch. You should stretch the muscles you will be using as well as the larger stabilizing muscles. Always stretch your back and legs because they are used to stabilize your body.

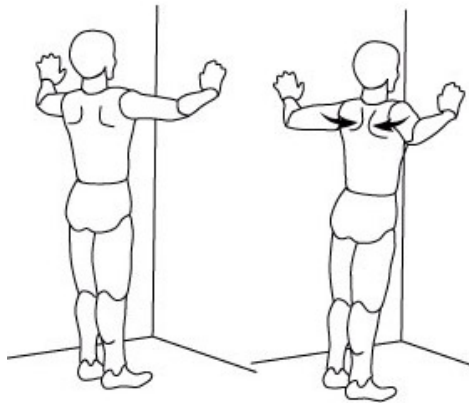
Stretching tips and General Stretches

Stretching is useful for both injury prevention and injury treatment. It increases your flexibility which directly translates into reduced risk of injury. It also helps prevent injuries and promotes faster recovery if you do suffer an injury.

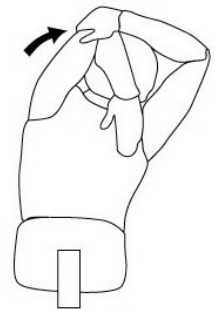
- Slowly move a joint towards its end-range of motion.
- A gentle "pulling" sensation should be felt.
- Do not stretch to the point of pain and do not bounce as this may cause injury to the muscle.
- Hold for 15 - 20 seconds and repeat stretches 3 to 5 times.



Sitting in a chair, lean forward and reach for the floor. Hold for 5 seconds and then slowly sit up. Repeat 3 – 5 times.



Place your palms on the wall, at shoulder height, straddling the corner. Slowly step into the corner and stretch chest muscles by moving shoulder blades together. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 3 – 5 times.



Reach one hand behind your head (toward the other shoulder blade) and use your other hand to increase the stretch. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 3 – 5 times.



Bring knee up towards your chest, while keeping your back against the backrest of the chair. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 3 – 5 times.



Stand facing the wall (close enough to lean on it) with toes pointed straight forward. Move one leg forward and bend your knee as in picture. While leaning on wall and keeping back heel on floor, press hips forward to get stretch in back calf muscle. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 3 – 5 times.



Place your hands on the small of your back (just above your buttocks) and bend backwards. Keep your knees straight. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 3 – 5 times.