

## Fitness Focus-Lower Back Care (part 3) Maintenance & Prevention Program

You now should have a basic understanding of the structure of the spine and be familiar with some proper body mechanics for daily living. We will now look at a way to maintain a healthy back and prevent most episodes in the first place.

The objectives of this exercise program are:

1. to stretch tight muscles in lower back
2. to increase the mobility of the spine
3. to improve sitting and standing posture

The exercises should be performed on a firm surface. They can be done daily. Use the “progression principle.” Try to start with 10-15 repetitions for each exercise. Avoid any exercises that increase your pain significantly.

1. Single knee to chest-lie flat on back with both knees bent and alternate bring one knee towards the chest and holding
2. Double knee to chest-same as #1 but bring both knees up and hold
3. Partial Curl-up-slowly raise head and shoulders off surface, sliding hands from thighs to kneecaps and holding for 5-10 seconds and slowly return to start position
4. Seated hamstring stretch-seated with one knee bent and the other straight (very slight bend), gently stretch both hands towards foot of straight leg and hold stretch (KEEP BACK STRAIGHT)
5. Standing extensions-stand upright and place your hands in the small of your back, gently bend backwards at the waist, return to upright position, repeat
6. Stink bug-lie on back, point both arms straight up in the air (perpendicular to ground), point both upper legs straight up (perpendicular to ground), keep both lower legs parallel to the ground, start by moving right arm and right leg (as if they were attached) 6-12” towards your feet, as you return them back towards your head, do the same with the left side, think of puppets (right arm moves with right leg and left arm moves with left leg)

### Lesson Review

1. What is the reoccurring focus of this lesson and the first two lessons?
2. What are the objectives of the exercise program?
3. Where and how often should the exercises be done?
4. Describe the progression principle.
5. Describe how you could apply the progression principle to this exercise program.
6. List the key elements of each exercise. Include a drawing or picture of each exercise.