

## **BACK CARE**

### Do's

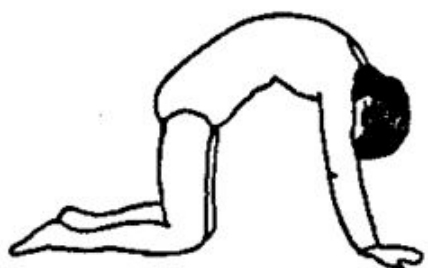
1. Do the prescribed exercises when your pain has subsided to prevent further back problems.
2. Do use a heating pad intermittently on your back area.
3. Do sleep on a firm mattress and sit on a slightly higher chair, preferably with armrest. To get out of the bed, lay on your side on the border of the bed so that your legs dangle, and then, sit up on your side. Do the reverse movement to lay down on the bed.
4. Do use your hands to assist you from rising or settling into a high chair, for holding onto a rail on stairs, and to assist you in bending to pick up something.
5. Do stoop with your knees and not your back.
6. Do gentle, non impact sports like swimming or stationary bicycle.
7. Do take your medication as prescribed by your physician.

### Don'ts

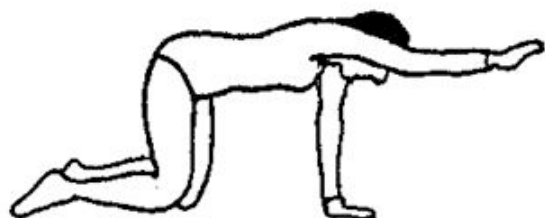
1. Don't do any exercises when your back is in acute pain. Be very cautious about doing other than prescribed exercises. Avoid sit-ups and bending exercises.
2. Don't sit in one position for more than half hour; rather alternate sitting with standing. Avoid soft, low seats.
3. Don't drive a car when your back is in acute pain. Use a wire wicker type of back seat support.
4. Don't stand in a partially bent position for any length of time, i.e., gardening.
5. Don't smoke.

Alejandro González Della Valle, MD

**\*\* SEE OVER FOR EXERCISES \*\***



*Cat Arch* Start on hands and knees, arch up like a cat and tighten abdominals. Hold for 5-25 counts. Return to start. Repeat.



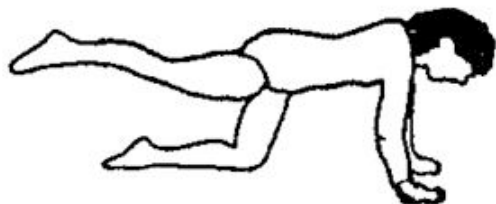
*Arm Reach* on hands and knees, stretch one arm straight out in front of you. Do not raise your head. Hold for count of 5. Repeat. Switch arms.



*Partial Curl-up* Lie on back with knees bent and arms folding across chest. Lift head and shoulders up. Return to start. Repeat. Every 5th time hold for 10-15 seconds (if possible). 20 times total to start with and work up to 50.



*Hip Lift* Lie on back with knees bent, without arching your back, slowly raise your hips upward. Keep a straight line from knees to shoulders. Hold for count of 5, lower. Repeat.



*Leg Reach* On hands and knees extend one leg straight out behind and hold it parallel to the floor for a count of 5. Do not let leg, back, head, or stomach sag; and try not to arch back. Return to starting position. Repeat. Switch legs.



**DON'T DO IF YOU HAVE A HIP REPLACEMENT**

*Heel Sit* Start on hands and knees, rock back onto heels. Hold for 5-15 counts, return to hands and knees. Repeat.