

Lumbar Disc Home-Care Instructions:

1. Absolutely avoid bending at the waist as much as possible. This position puts the most amount of pressure on the discs, especially if you are lifting extra weight and/or twisting at the same time.
2. Minimize your time spent sitting, especially without back support, as this puts a lot of pressure on the discs.
3. The following exercises can often have a pain-relieving quality to them. If you are in pain, try them.
4. Ice is often helpful for an acute disc injury. If instructed, ice the lower back frequently for not longer than 20 minutes at one time.

Abdominal Bracing

With knees slightly bent, contract all of your abdominal muscles simultaneously, creating a "brace." Visualize locking your ribs on top of your pelvis. The geometry of your stomach should not change (you should not suck your stomach in.) Don't hold your breath. This is the "locked-in" position referred to in the following exercises.

You should practice maintaining this brace anytime your back is in a vulnerable position, such as when getting in and out of a car or picking up something off the floor.



Curl-ups



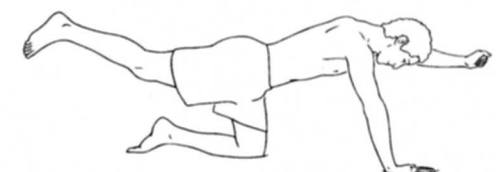
Lie on your back with one knee bent and your hands underneath the arch of your lower back. Brace the abdominals, then lift your chest (not your head) slightly towards the ceiling, just enough to lift your shoulders off the floor. Try to use your abs to hold the spine in position relative to your hands. If your neck hurts doing this, you can support your head with one hand. Hold for 5-8 seconds, relax and then repeat.

TRUNK STABILITY - 6 Bent Leg Lift (Hook-Lying)



Place hands under the back (not pictured) and brace the abs to lock the spine in place as in the "Curl-up." Lift one leg only about 1-2 inches off the floor, pause, then lower back down- as soon as that foot hits the floor, lift the other leg. Be sure to maintain the abd brace the entire time. To increase the difficulty of this exercise, just go a little faster, but make sure there is always one leg in contact with the ground at all times.

"Bridge Exercise"



Start on hands and knees with chin lightly tucked and with Neutral Pelvis "locked in." As with dead bug, there are two motions to combine: Raising a straight arm and extending the opposite leg (squeeze the gluteal muscle.) Again hold for one second and then repeat with opposite limbs. Perform 3-10 reps per side for one set. Perform 1-3 sets _____ times/ day _____ times/ week.

Side Plank



Lie on your side with your top foot in front of the other. Prop up onto your elbow as show, using your other hand to grasp your shoulder to stabilize it. Brace your abs to hold your torso in a rigid straight line. Hold for 5-8 seconds, relax, and then repeat. If this proves too difficult, you can rest on your knees instead of your feet.

Mackenzie: Standing

Mackenzie extension exercises can actually help to retract some of the disc material with time. If advised, try doing repetitions throughout the day, holding for no more than about 3 seconds at a time.

If you feel any increased back or especially leg pain discontinue and let me know.



Mackenzie Exercise: Prone(1)



Another extension move to retract the disc material. Rise up on elbows as high as possible, keeping hips on floor. Only go as far as comfortable. Hold for 10-30 seconds. If you have any increased pain in the back or especially in the leg(s), discontinue and tell me.