



**PRIME CARE**  
CHIROPRACTIC CENTERS

## Home Rehabilitation Routine

### *“Low Back Stretches”*

*Simple and quick exercises  
that EVERYONE can benefit from!*

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*Which came first: the chicken or the egg?*

When it comes to the low back, core strength deficiencies and low back tightness are almost always associated with each other. Weakness in the core causes overuse and fatigue of the muscles in the low back resulting in that feeling of “tightness” due to the low back muscles having to work overtime. On the other hand, because the low back muscles are working extra hard, the core muscles take a break and don’t work quite as hard and become weak. This is a never ending cycle that continues to progress towards degeneration in the lumbar vertebrae. **Stretching the low back should go hand-in-hand with core strengthening exercises.**

*How to use this routine?*

The “Low Back Stretches” routine should be performed before or after some basic core strengthening exercises (see “*The Basics: Core*”). Utilizing both routines will support each other and potentially yield more results than just using one. Don’t worry about doing the complete list of the low back stretches and core strengthening exercises every time. Even if just some of the exercises from this routine are used with some of the exercises from the core routine, you will be making progress!

*Disclaimer*

Unless you are going to yoga regularly or are just blessed with incredible flexibility, be patient and take it easy when you begin these stretches. Years and years in the tightness/weakness cycle can’t be fixed overnight. The pictures and descriptions below represent the **goal** movement, not where you should be right now. Some positions may be easier than others, which is completely normal. If it is difficult to get to a full and complete position, just do your best to recreate the position. The purpose of these stretches is to begin to loosen up the muscles.

## 1) **Knee to chest-**

How to perform this stretch: Lie on your back and keep one leg slightly bent. Use your hands to bring your other knee into your chest.

Tips: Pay attention to any “weak” or “tight” areas from side to side; this could be another imbalance that may require additional work.

Goals: Hold this position for between 20 to 30 seconds while concentrating on breathing deeply and slowly. Carefully move out of the stretch position and then repeat on the other side. Repeat 2-3 times on each side. Finally, bring both knees to the chest and hold for 20-30 seconds, 2-3 times.



## 2) **Child's Pose (w/ reaches)-**

Begin by pointing your toes and sitting back on your heels as much as you can. Reach your arms out straight in front of you on the ground. Relax and reach out as far as you can with your hands as you try to keep your butt completely on your heels.

To add in reaches and stretch your sides, start reaching straight ahead as you sit your butt back on your heels. Walk your hands to one side. Breathe and feel the stretch down your side and into your low back. Make sure to continue to sit back on your heels and not pull forward as you reach. Perform to one side and walk your hands back to the center. Relax and then continue to the other side.

Goals: Hold this position for between 20 to 30 seconds while concentrating on breathing deeply and slowly. Carefully move out of the stretch position and then repeat on the other side. Repeat 2-3 times on each side.



Credit: [redefiningstrength.com](http://redefiningstrength.com)

### 3) **Prone Press up-**

While lying on your stomach, place your hands under your shoulders as if you are going to do a push-up. While keeping your hips on the ground, lift your upper body off the table. Repeat 8-10 times, holding the raised position for 5 seconds each.

Due to the nature of how discs in the spine bulge and herniate, this is a great exercise to aid in helping the disc heal.

**Do NOT perform this stretch if you have been diagnosed with a spondylolisthesis.**



#### 4) **Seated Twist Stretch-**

Begin in a seated position with your legs extended straight out in front of you. Bend your right knee and place your right heel as close to your left hip as you can.

For a lighter stretch, “hug” the bended knee against your body. This will target the glutes and piriformis muscle. For a deeper stretch, place the left arm on the right thigh and turn towards the right. This will target more of the low back. Repeat on both sides. Hold the stretch for 30 seconds.



## 5) Cat & Camel Stretch

Begin by getting on your hands and knees. The overall motion of this exercise will be arching your back upwards and downwards. When performing the “Cat” portion of the stretch, push your belly down towards the ground and lift your head upwards while sticking out your butt. The “camel” portion is just the opposite: bring your belly up while raising your mid-back, bringing in your hips. This stretch isn’t as complicated as it sounds but when in doubt, refer to the pictures!

Perform 10 sets of both the “Cat” & the “Camel” portion of the stretch. Try to keep your motion fluid and smooth and not bouncy. This stretch will help increase thoracic and lumbar mobility.

