

ActiveYou

The ActiveHealth® Management newsletter that helps you live healthy and well

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Say “no” to lower back pain

Has your lower back been bothering you? If so, you’re not alone. Lower back pain is common and can happen to anyone. But it can also be treated—and you can feel better!

Most lower back pain can improve with light exercise, such as walking, or by taking over-the-counter pain medicine as needed. You may also want to do some simple exercises to strengthen the muscles in your core. This can improve your posture, keep your body in better balance, and lower your chance of injury. In some cases, spinal manipulation, massage, or acupuncture may be helpful. You might also want to try applying ice or heat.

Even if you do all of these things, you may feel lower back pain again. But there are things you can do to help prevent it, such as:

- Practice good posture when you sit, stand, and walk. “Good posture” means your ears, shoulders, and hips are in a straight line.
- Get regular, low-impact exercise—walk, swim, or ride a stationary bike
- Sleep on your side
- Keep a healthy weight
- Don’t try to lift things that are too heavy
- At work, sit or stand up straight, with your shoulders back. Make sure your chair has good back support.

Muscle cramps



A muscle cramp is a strong, painful contraction or tightening of a muscle that comes on suddenly and lasts anywhere from a few seconds to several minutes. If you have muscle cramps, you can try:

- Stretching and massaging the muscle
- Taking a warm shower or bath to relax the muscle
- Using an ice or cold pack
- Taking medicine exactly as prescribed
- Drinking plenty of fluids



Upcoming events

Wellness Webinar Series

“No Pain, All Gain”

August 14, 2018

10:00 am, 12:30 pm and 4:30 pm ET

<http://go.activehealth.com/wellness-webinars>

Stretching for better health



Your muscles were made to be stretched. And loosening them up before doing things like running or playing tennis can help prevent injury, soreness, and cramping. Stretching can also make it easier to do daily tasks that involve reaching or bending over.

Ready to try stretching? Follow these tips:

- Stretch the muscles you will be using in your main exercise for 5 to 10 minutes
- Try to hold each stretch for at least 15 to 30 seconds
- Ease yourself into the stretch—relax, and don't push or bounce
- Breathe normally as you do the stretch
- Try closing your eyes while stretching—it can help you relax and focus
- Do your exercise program

After your exercise, cool down by stretching for another 5 to 10 minutes.



Coach's corner

Meet Derrick, a coach and certified exercise physiologist who has worked with people of all ages, in a variety of settings. When he's not helping others develop fitness routines, he enjoys Olympic weightlifting!



Derrick's tips:

If you have neck pain, you can make simple changes which may help! Try these tips:

- Sit straight in your chair with your lower back supported, feet flat on the floor, and shoulders relaxed.
- Avoid slouching or a head-forward position
- If you use a telephone a lot, use a headset or speaker phone
- Take short breaks several times an hour to stretch your muscles
- Don't sleep on your stomach with your neck twisted or bent.



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