

# Exercise and guidance following spinal surgery

Therapy Services

**The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.**

- **Wash your hands with soap and warm water and dry thoroughly. Use hand gel, if provided, in care facilities.**
- **If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and vomiting stay at home and do not visit relatives that are vulnerable in hospital or in residential care. You will spread the illness.**
- **Keep the environment clean and safe. Let's work together to keep it that way. Prevention is better than cure.**

## Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for patients who have had surgery to their back. It will explain the exercises you need to do to help you recover following your surgery and provide advice on returning to activities.

This leaflet is split into two sections:

1. Early spinal exercises
2. General advice on returning to activities.

Your physiotherapist will tell you which exercises you should be working on at any given time and will go through this with you whilst you are in hospital. **Please do not attempt any exercises other than the ones your physiotherapist tells you to.**

You will receive physiotherapy as an outpatient after your discharge from hospital. If you have not received an appointment within two weeks after your discharge, please contact:

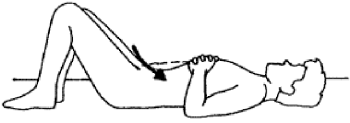
**01902 695596**

## Who should I contact if I have any concerns or questions about my physiotherapy?

If you're worried about any aspect of your physiotherapy please speak to the physiotherapist in charge of your care. Messages can be left on the above number during normal working hours (Monday to Friday, 8.30a.m. to 4.30p.m.) for your physiotherapist to call you back.

In the very unlikely case that you require physiotherapy advice outside of these hours please contact the ward you were discharged from.

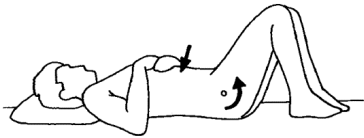
**Start** lying on your back with knees bent. Relax your stomach and slowly draw your tummy button up and in. You should feel a gentle tightening in your lower stomach. Do not let your back or pelvis move. Keep your tummy button held in for ten seconds.



Repeat 5-10 times.

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**Start** lying on your back with one leg bent and one leg straight (or both legs bent if this is more comfortable).



Try to flatten your lower back against the bed. You will feel a stretch in your lower back. Reverse the movement and try to bring the pelvis forward, to create a small curve away from the bed. At no point should your bottom lift off the bed.

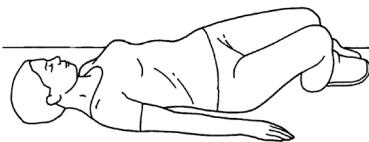
Repeat 5-10 times.

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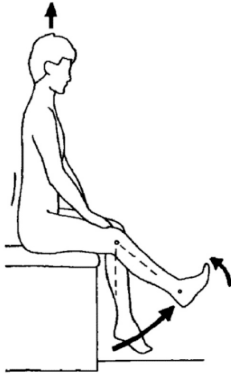
**Start** lying on your back with your knees bent.

Keeping your knees together, roll gently from side to side.

Repeat 5-10 times.



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**Start** sitting on the edge of the bed or a chair.

Pull your toes on the leg to be exercised up towards you and slowly straighten your knee. Now slowly point your toes away and then bring your toes back towards you.

The exercise should be painless.

The movements should only be taken to the point where you have the first awareness of resistance.

Move between these two positions for 45 seconds.

# Guidance for completing steps or stairs



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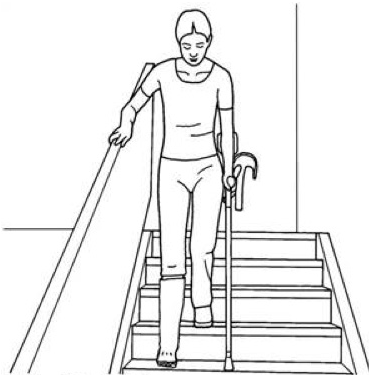
Use a handrail (if one is available) and a walking aid on the opposite side.

On steps or stairs without a rail you will need to use two walking aids.

Place the good leg up on the step above.

Bring your bad leg up to join it.

Finally bring up the walking aid.



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Use a handrail (if one is available) and a walking aid on the opposite side. On steps or stairs without a rail you will need to use two walking aids.

Place the walking aid down on the step below.

Follow with your bad leg.

Finally bring the good leg down.

# Returning to daily activities following spinal surgery

You should gradually increase your activity levels with the aim to be functioning as normal at eight weeks post-surgery. The table below demonstrates the expected timescales and goals to achieve from day one post op to Week 8. This information is for guidance and should not replace any advice given to you by your consultant or physiotherapist.

Activity	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
Sitting	High stool			Normal Chairs					Low chairs		Normal activity
Standing											Normal activity
Walking											Normal activity
Stairs											Normal activity
Washing		Shower			Bath						Normal activity
Housework			Light				Moderate		Heavy		Normal activity
Sports					Swimming	Cycling/ Exercise Bike			Aerobics		Normal activity
Lifting				Light			Moderate		Heavy		Normal activity
Driving					Short Journeys				Long Journeys		Normal activity
Intercourse											Normal activity
Work					Office		Light Manual Work				Heavy Manual Work



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### **Advice**

- Do your exercises gently. Do not push yourself too hard; you should gradually increase the number of repetitions. Remember, you may not have exercised for a while due to your back pain.

- Gradually build up the amount of time you spend walking and sitting. Keeping mobile will speed up your recovery.

- In sitting, try to ensure that you don't sit with your legs curled under the chair as this can increase the tension on the nerves in your back, and may contribute to leg symptoms.

- During the day, try not to maintain one posture (i.e. sitting or standing) for more than 30 minutes. Ensure that you change position or walk around to prevent your back from becoming stiff.

## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。