

Get Physical to Ease Back Pain



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To learn more, call
1-888-LOURDES
(1-888-568-7337) or visit
www.lourdesnet.org.

“Oh, my aching back!” If you’ve never griped about your back, count yourself lucky. Back pain is one of the most common reasons we visit the doctor, affecting 80 percent of us at some point in our lives.

To keep your back healthy, though, there’s a fairly easy prescription: Get moving.

“Doctors used to recommend just bed rest,” said Lourdes Medical Associates orthopedic surgeon Leigh Hopkins, MD, JD. “Daily exercise can improve your posture, strengthen your back muscles, make you more flexible and help you avoid falls. Regular stretching can also make the difference between a resilient spine and one that’s prone to problems.”

Here are the latest, proven ways that exercise and other simple steps can keep your back in good standing.

Don't Just Sit There

Sitting for long periods is one of the worst things you can do for your back. It compresses spinal disks, which cushion your backbone. If you spend most of your time glued to a computer or TV, stand up every 30 minutes for a minute or two and stretch.

When you’re sitting, maintain proper form: Scoot all the way back in your chair with a roll of paper towels or a lumbar pillow wedged behind your back in your waist area. Once your lower back is supported, your neck and upper back will stay in good alignment.

Work Your Core

Regular core strengthening, which targets your abs, buttocks and back, can improve your overall fitness and help keep your back healthy. Yoga and t’ai chi can also make you more flexible and fortify your core, reducing your risk for back pain. Poses can be tailored to your condition. Find a back-friendly yoga instructor and start with a beginner class. Lourdes Wellness Center offers yoga and t’ai chi classes for all levels.

Get Moving!

It’s not easy finding time to exercise. Learn some easy and convenient ways to stay in shape at the office, at home and on the road in our **FREE** brochure, *Exercise for Busy People*. Call **1-888-LOURDES (1-888-568-7337)** to order yours today!



Visit www.lourdeswellnesscenter.org to learn more.

Walk, Run, Swim

You wouldn’t think that aerobic exercises, such as walking, running, cycling or swimming, would help prevent back pain. But they can.

“Regular cardiovascular exercise may not only decrease low back pain, but it also may help you recover faster, prevent re-injury and keep your weight in check,” said Dr. Hopkins. “Your doctor and physical therapist can help develop the exercise plan right for you.”

