

Exercises for upper and lower back mobility

Below are a set of exercises that you might wish to try if arthritis in your back is causing stiffness. Repeat each exercises 5 times.

You should always build up new activities slowly. You may experience mild discomfort whilst performing these exercises. If this persists, stop immediately and consult your doctor, an osteopath or a physiotherapist. Don't force through the pain.

These exercises are intended to be gentle. However, if you have any concerns about whether they are suitable for you, please consult a healthcare professional before taking part.

For more information, visit: www.arthritisaction.org.uk

Laying spine twist



- Start laying on your back with a pillow under your head
- Drop both knees to one side. Don't push this, just let gravity do the work
- Hold for 10 seconds and then return to the start position
- Repeat on the other side

Knee hugs



- Start laying on your back with a pillow under your head, knees bent and feet on the floor
- Bring your knees up into your chest and hold for 30 seconds
- Return slowly to the start position using your hands to lower your legs



Sitting spine twist

- Sit on a chair with feet on the ground, your back straight and your arms crossed
- Twist your body around to one side and hold for 5 seconds
- Repeat to the other side

Cat stretch

Only try this exercise if you are comfortable on all fours. If not, try the sitting spine twist:



- Start on all fours
- Arch your back up as shown in the diagram and hold for 30 seconds
- Return to the start position

This exercise may not be appropriate if you have knee arthritis, find it difficult to get up off the floor or have had a replacement