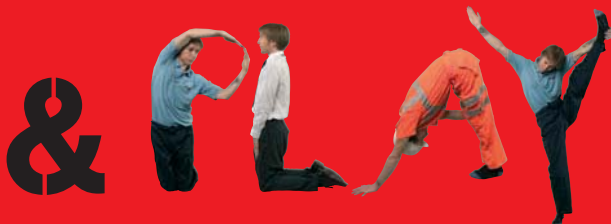


3 minutes a day help you...



everyone
home safe
every day



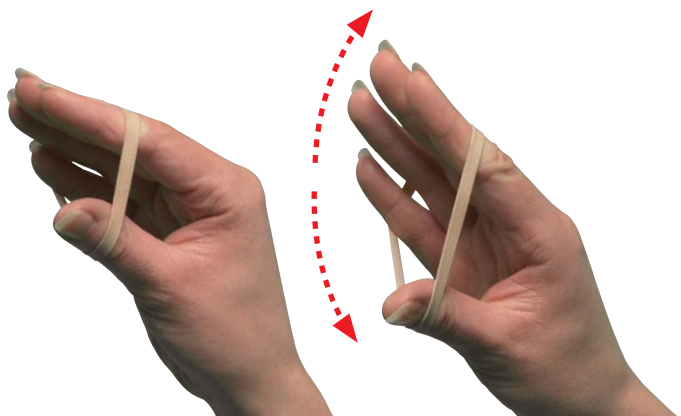
Top 10 Tips to maintain a healthy back

1. **Keep good posture** – avoid slumping in your chair or walking round with your shoulders all hunched up.
2. **Think about how you are sitting** – always use a chair with a back rest and sit with your feet flat on the floor or on a footrest. Avoid staying in the same position for long periods of time, take breaks, stand up and stretch, and try to change your sitting position once in a while.
3. **Don't bend your back when you lift something** – keep your feet wide apart to help you feel stable and bend your knees and your hips instead of your back.
4. **Don't twist and bend at the same time.**
5. **Always lift and carry objects close to your body.**
6. **Keep your weight down** – being overweight puts extra strain on your back, so try and stay a healthy weight by keeping active and eating healthily.
7. **Avoid single sling bags** – try to carry loads in a rucksack.
8. **Choose your mattress carefully** – bearing in mind your height, weight, age, sleeping position and type of backache, if any.
9. **Exercise your back regularly** – walking, swimming (*especially back stroke*) and using an exercise bike are excellent ways to strengthen your back.
10. **Cut down, or better still, quit smoking** – some studies have shown that there could be a link between smoking and lower back pain.

Find out more information on Connect.

Flexercise 1:

The Hand and Fingers



Loosen up stiff fingers and wrists with this handy little workout.

Wrap the (supplied) 'hand-tastic band' around your fingers – then simply stretch then relax it. Repeat this for 30 seconds.

Flexercise 2:

The Wrist Roll



Don't put your wrists at risk. Remember to give them a regular little workout.

Roll and unroll your hands, holding (as in the right-hand image) for a count of three. Do this 10 times every day.

Flexercise 3: **The Arm Curl**



Ease the tension in your arms by doing this quick and easy exercise every day.

Gently push up your lower arm against the downward pressure of your top arm. Hold this for a count of three and repeat holding your other arm.

Flexercise 4: The Leg Ups



Give your calves a good old stretch with this handy little number.

Simply raise and lower your heels off the floor, holding them up for a count of three. Do this 10 times every day.

Flexercise 5:

The Shoulder Shrug



Just 30 seconds a day will help shrug off tightness and tension in your neck and shoulders.

Gently raise and lower your shoulders for 30 seconds. Try not to compress your neck as you're doing it.

Flexercise 6: **The Neck Turn**



Turn your back on neck tension with this simple exercise.

Turn your head slowly to one side, hold for a count of three and then bring it back to the centre. Do five on one side then five on the other.

Flexercise 7: Back Arch



Stretch out your back before going out on track.

Stand with your feet as wide apart as your hips and place your hands in the small of your back. Arch backwards without bouncing. Repeat this five to ten times.

Flexercise 8: **Upper Chest and Biceps**



Strengthening your chest will improve the condition of your back.

With your thumbs turned out and your wrists back, reach behind you and **hold for 10 seconds.**

Flexercise 9: Legs



Work those legs and strengthen your back.

Raise alternate knees to your chest whilst bending your back a little to meet them. Repeat five to ten times a day.

Flexercise 10: Wall Rest



Let the wall take the strain as you stretch your legs.

Place your head, shoulders and hips against the wall, and slide down. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat five to ten times a day.