



## eSafetyLine

### **Do's and Don'ts of Back Exercises**

Exercise and overall fitness can go a long way to helping an injured back recover and keeping a healthy back healthy. Unfortunately, when you have back pain or a back injury the last thing you want to do is exercise it. However medical opinion is in just about complete agreement that movement and exercise is a crucial part of back care and safety. Some Do's and Don'ts to help keep you on track:

- **DO** learn to stretch. Stretches should always be done before exercising and be done slowly and gently, without jerks or excessive force. Don't just copy others, especially athletes! To get it really right, book a session with a trainer at the gym or with a physical therapist.
- **DO** wear good quality training sneakers. These are excellent for reducing impact forces with the ground, which otherwise generate a shockwave up the back. This really is a case of "you get what you pay for" and buying a better quality sneaker can help increase the safety of your back while exercising.
- **DON'T** waste money on a home workout machine. Most people quickly stop using them because they are so boring. You may enjoy the same machine at your local gym but use it longer because having people around helps keep you interested.
- **DO** select a form of exercise suitable for your fitness level - if you are a beginner, work up gradually. Keep in mind: professional athletes didn't wake up one day and decide to compete; they've trained at their sport for many, many years.

- DON'T do much in your first few days. Your tolerance will be very low at first, and if you do too much you won't be able to do anything the next day. Also, you will be put it off; once you get started you'll want to try to build on your momentum.
- DON'T do sports which make you bend your back, or move suddenly, like cycling or squash, until your back is fully recovered. They may seem more exciting or more fun, but if you try them too soon you could do more damage than you may realize.
- DO find an exercise that you enjoy. You will be more likely to continue. It only makes sense: you'll want to do something you like more often than something that you hate.
- DON'T do impact sports like running, at least to start with. If your back is injured you'll need to start slow to allow it to heal.
- DON'T avoid lifting altogether. Moderate loads on your back are needed to build up fitness in the back muscles. But lift correctly.
- DON'T play competitive team games to start with - you may be tempted to overdo it, or you might hurt your back in a collision. Remember your back didn't get in this condition overnight nor will you be able to fix the problem overnight.
- DO stop if an activity creates increasing pain in your back. Find a different sport until you are fitter.

### **Discussion Questions**

Why might exercising a sore or injured back sound like a bad idea?

Why is it important to take things slow when first starting to exercise after an injury or many years without activity?

# MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

TOPICS ADDRESSED: \_\_\_\_\_

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## EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

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EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

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ACTION TAKEN: \_\_\_\_\_

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Supervisor's Signature

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Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Safety Coordinator's Signature

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Date