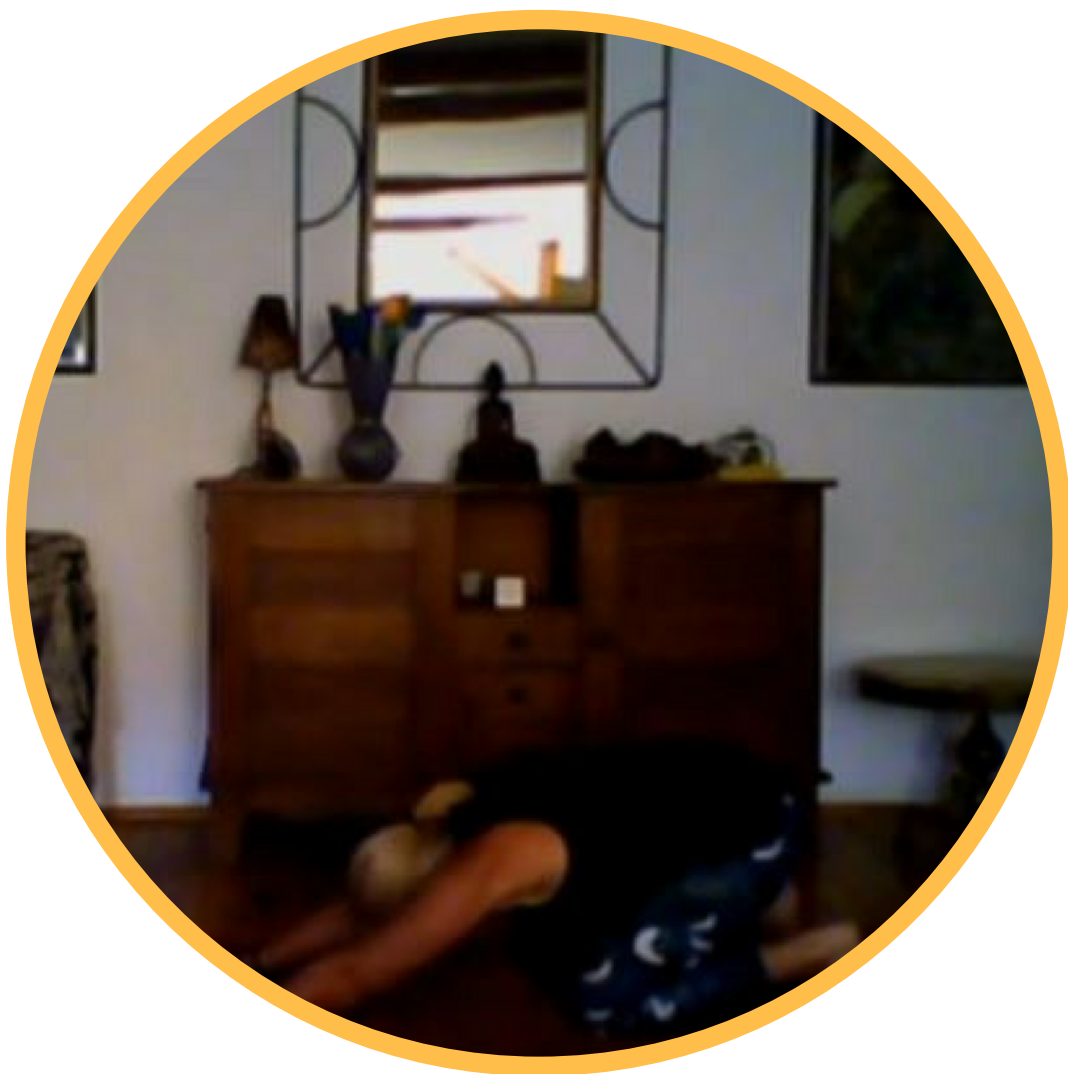


LOWER BACK PAIN



Lower Back Pain

Let's talk about lower back pain. So many people are suffering with lower back pain due to the fact many people sit at desks all day, stand all day, or they do jobs where they're not moving very much.

They are not engaging their core, or thinking about their posture because they are too busy in their head.

Let's talk about posture and breathing and show you a few exercises for lower back problems.



Engaging The Core

Let's focus on your core and engaging the core.

Stand up straight and think about your heels, balls of your feet, your toes to balance your body.

Give yourself a little bit of a wriggle.

Imaging your body is balanced and feel what it feels like, standing straight.

Feel the weight on your body, stacked on top of itself, standing straight.



Take a deep breath in through the nose and
exhale through the mouth.

Inhale and exhale.

Feel your heels, balls of the feet and toes on
the floor.

Lift your toes up. (When you lift your toes up,
you stand up taller).

Drop them down and balance evenly on both
feet, with your toes lightly touching the floor.



Visualise your feet, ankles, shins, knees keep your knees soft. Not locked or bent but soft.

Lifting up through the knee caps, come through the thighs and come to your centre, to your core, to your abdominal region.

You need to look at strengthening through that section.

It is almost like a corset, that runs around to your back area and the front, lower abs area and underneath towards your pelvic region.

Starting with your pelvic floor muscles.

So switching the pelvic floor muscles on about 30% - 50%. Lifting up.



If you are not sure how to engage your pelvic floor, think about the muscles you use if you want to go to the toilet and you're not near a toilet.

The muscles that stop you urinating, are the pelvic floor muscles.

You are going to lift those pelvic floor muscles gently.

They are the base of your core muscles.

Imagine you have a wide belt around your lumbar spine, in between your navel and your pubic bone and your imaginary belt has ten holes.



Take a deep breath in through the nose, then imagine you're drawing that belt in, then breath out contracting your abdominal muscles, draw the belly button back towards the spine. So you are holding as tightly as you can.

Take another breath in and breathe out.

Again breathe in and breathe out.

Then loosen the imaginary belt, from the 10th hole to the 9th, 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th 4th, and the 3rd hole.

Now you are holding around 30%. Remember to do that wherever you are.



You can do this even when you are sitting.

You can engage the pelvic floor muscles whether you are sitting, standing, walking, moving, or exercising.

You can do this whatever you do workwise too. This is a great exercise to do, and it can be done anytime, anywhere, without anyone else wondering what you are doing.

Take in another breath, fill up the lungs and broaden the ribcage.

If you stand up straight and push out your ribcage, you put pressure on your lumbar spine.



So you need to broaden the ribcage, while doing this it helps bring more oxygen into the lung capacity. So you are filling up your lungs.

Imagine you are setting up a space between the ribs, breath out, keep the rib cage broadened.

Bring your shoulders right up under your ears, drop them to the shoulder blades, as you breathe out. Think of your neck lengthened towards the ceiling.

Let's do a mobilisation of the spine.



Mobilisation Of The Spine



Take a breath in.

Chin to the chest.

Knees soft.



Drawing the abdominal muscles.

Tuck your head in.

Bring your knees down to your thighs.

Roll down. Let your head go.

If you can and it is not pulling in the back, let your arms slide gently down your legs.

If you find this too strong, you can rest your hands above your knees.

So in letting the head go, you are giving it a bit of mobilisation, and stretching the vertebrae.



Breathing in, coming up slowly, stacking the vertebrae, lengthening your spine, and dropping your shoulders down.

Standing nice and tall.

Do that a couple of times. Breathing in, mobilising the spine, breathing out.

We are going down on the floor for some specific exercises to help your back.



Inverted V Position



Breathing in.

Drop all the way down, if you can.



Walk out in front of you on your hands. Come to an inverted V position.

Push the heels of your hands into the mat.

Drop your head between your arms.

Stretch into your hamstrings by coming up to your toes.

Breathing in.

Drop one heel down at a time as you breathe out.



We will go for 10. Staying in that position and walking your feet. Feel those hamstrings stretching. 9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 walking on alternate legs.

Drop the heels down as you breathe out.

From there come down to your knees. Reach out your arms and shoulders, forward stretching your spine. This is a lovely stretch for your back.

Walk the hands forward, feel that lovely stretch. If you can drop your buttocks down to your heels.

Take 4 breaths here.



Inhaling through your nose and exhaling
through your mouth.

Breathing in. Breathing out.

Breathing in. Breathing out.

Doing this for 3 breaths.

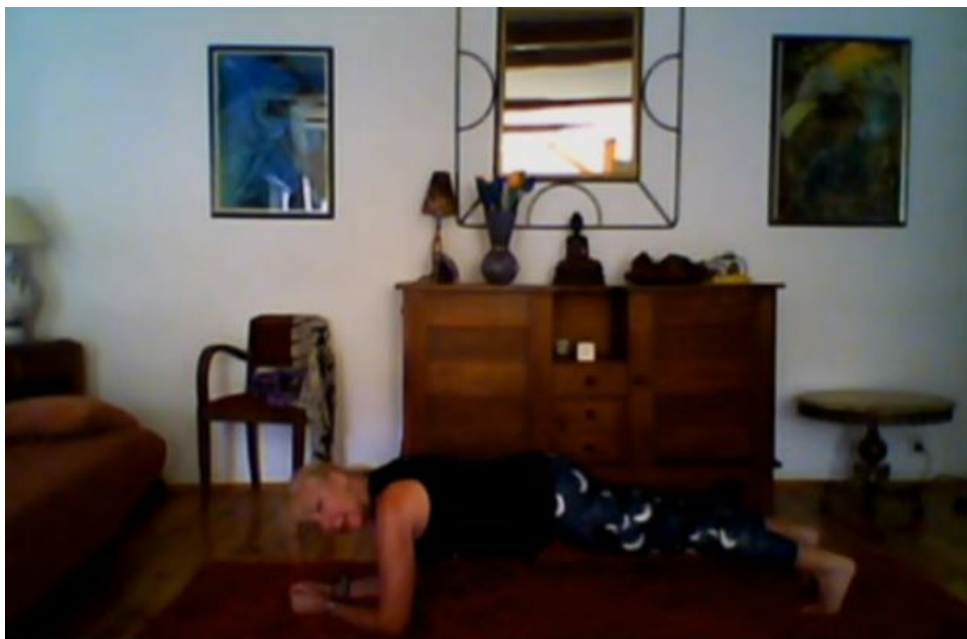
Come up onto all fours. Without putting any
stress on your back, contract your abdominal
muscles.

**This is a fantastic exercise for
strengthening your core and back, without
putting pressure on your back.**



Take a breath in, contract your abdominals as you breathe out.

This is an easy exercise. You can take this further by going into a plank.



If you find it is too strong on your wrists, come down onto your elbows and if you wish, take this into a plank position.



Extend the legs out and hold.

Take a breath in and draw into your abdominal muscles as you breathe out.

Strengthening your back muscles.

Breathing in. Breathing out.

Breathing in. Breathing out.

Do 5 breaths while holding this position.



Child's Pose



Come down to your knees and stretch your arms and shoulders out in front of you into the child pose.



Come back to all fours, take a breath in, tuck your tailbone under, mobilising the spine.

Chin to chest.

Breathing in.

Breathing out, bringing yourself to a neutral position.



Swimming Exercise



Come all the way down to your floor or your mat.

Face down.



Stretch out.

Slide the body forward.

Reach your arms forward.

This is a wonderful exercise for your back. It works across the spine, across the muscles.

Legs hip width apart, drop your shoulders down and take your head slightly off the floor.

Take a breath in and lifting your left leg and your right arm.

Lower back down.



Take a breath in.

Lift opposite arm, opposite leg as you breathe out.

Lower back down, take a deep breath in and lift as you breathe out.

Swapping sides, lower back down, take a deep breath in and lift as you breathe out.

Repeat this 5 times.

Come back up to all fours, push your bum back to your feet, stretching out your spine.

Come back to sitting.



Bend your knees. Place your hands at the back of your legs, and take each vertebrae down to the mat.

Go all the way down dropping your arms down beside you.



Drop your shoulders down, lengthen your neck, and then interlock your fingers and hands into the back of your head.



Roll up as you breathe out, eye level, looking beyond your knees, contract your abdominals.

Come back down, take a breath out, so you are engaging your core muscles as you breathe out.

Drop back down, take a breath in, and lift your shoulders up, breath out.

Lower back down, take a breath in. Lifting up again as you breath out. Do this 5 times.

Slide your arms down to your side, knees are still bent.

Take a breath in.



Half Bridge



Tilt the pelvis and come on up into a half bridge as you breath out.

Hold it there. Breathing in and out.



Hold it there.

Take a breath in. Breathe out.

Breathing in. Breathe out.

Do that 3 times.

Come back down to the mat.

Bring your knees back up to your chest

Rock back and forth.



This position is really nice to relieve back pain.

You can gently circle your legs one way, feeling it in your lower back, then circling the other way.

Coming back up to a sitting position.

These are a few simple exercises to help you to strengthen your lumbar spine and help you to relieve back pain.



**This Ebook is a collaboration between Jill Healy-
Quintard, Yoga Teacher at bodyandbalance
& Global Healing Exchange**

