

Lumbar Roll and McKenzie Extension for the Lower Back

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It is believed that at least 80% of people will experience back pain in their life at some point. Unfortunately often one episode leads to recurring episodes with each one being more intense than the last.

An injury may occur from an accident or more commonly from “doing nothing”. Either way the structures in your back become altered and cause pain. Typically pain comes from a lot of bending activities such as gardening, poor lifting techniques or simply sitting slouched. When we sit in poor posture on the couch, at the desk or in the car we put similar stresses on the back like when we bend and lift. This bent/slouched position causes adjustment of the location of the soft centre of the discs in between your vertebrae. The longer we spend slouching the more displacement occurs which presses against the ligaments causing them to overstretch and then increases the pressure on the sciatic nerve causing referred pain into our buttocks and legs.

Sports people often get back pain post exercise and believe it to be the sport causing this however more often than not it is because they are tired post exercise and slouch on the journey home or that evening!



Prevention is always better than cure. The easiest way to prevent back pain is by maintaining good posture. When sitting a lumbar roll is the best form of support. It can be attached onto chairs creating the curve in your lower back ensuring you sit correctly.

Lumbar rolls can be bought at each of our four clinics.

Due to the amount of bending activities the “McKenzie Extension” exercise is a good one to help balance out the onset of back pain or indeed prevent back pain.



- Lie facing down with your hands under your shoulders (in a press up position)
- Push up through your hands causing extension of your back
- Keep your pelvis, hips and legs relaxed allowing your lower back to sag
- Maintain this position for 1 or 2 seconds
- Repeat the exercise 8-12 times in a rhythmical motion pushing up further each time

Try the above advice but remember everyone’s back is different so seek a Physiotherapist’s advice in order to tailor treatment and exercises just for you.