

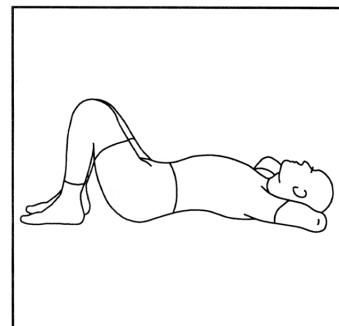
## Ten Minutes to Relaxation & Flexibility

With each of these exercises, concentrate on breathing into your abdomen and on the feeling of your muscles tightening and relaxing. These are “neuro-muscular re-education” exercises, designed to improve the communication loop between your muscles and your brain. Over time they will usually reduce pain, lower tension levels, and improve your conscious control of the muscles in your back, pelvis, abdomen and neck. Do them slowly and gently. Take about 7-10 seconds for each breath cycle (in and out).

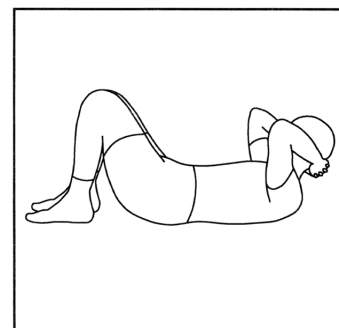
Most important: *Be fully present with your awareness focused on your breath, movement and sensations. Don't strain. If these exercises cause any discomfort, please call me for suggestions.*

### Pelvic Arch

1. Fingers behind your head, with tips touching, feet a few inches apart.
2. Breathe into your belly as you gently arch your low back and neck away from the floor. (Fig 1)
  - As you do this, your belly moves toward the ceiling, your tail bone rocks toward the floor, and your head tilts back.
  - Feel your spine *shorten* slightly as you do this movement (head and tail bone move closer together).
3. Exhale as you slowly flatten your low back against the floor. (Fig 2)
  - Feel your spine lengthen slightly (head and tail bone move further apart).
  - As you lengthen, tuck your chin, lifting your head a few inches. You can rest the backs of your hands on the floor and gently lift with fingers to support part of the weight of your head.
  - As your back flattens and spine lengthens, the tip of your tail bone will rock up away from the floor.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 about 6-9 times. Move gently and feel the sensations in your body.



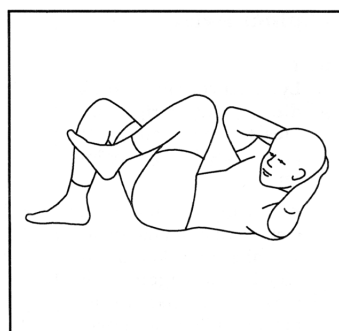
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### Diagonal Curls

1. As above.
2. As above.
3. As above.
4. As you tuck your chin, bring your opposite elbow and knee toward each other, lifting your opposite foot and shoulder from the floor. (Fig 3)
  - Try to bring each one about half way, as if they would meet in the middle (don't just lift your knee).
  - It is not necessary to touch them together if this is difficult for you.
5. Repeat steps 2-4, alternating sides, for a total of about 4-8 cycles.



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### Straight Curls

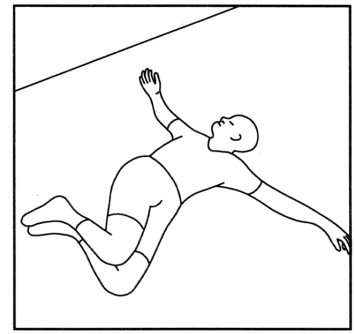
1. As above.
2. As above.
3. As Above
4. As you tuck your chin, bring your paired elbows and knees toward each other. (Fig 4 - while this shows wrapping your hands around your knees, I suggest you keep your fingers behind your neck and your elbows pointing forward)
  - Try to bring each part about half way, as if they would meet in the middle (lifting both shoulders and hips).
  - It is not necessary to touch them together if this is difficult for you.
5. Repeat steps 2 and 3, for a total of about 4-8 cycles.
6. *Rest, breathe, relax, and listen quietly to your body.*



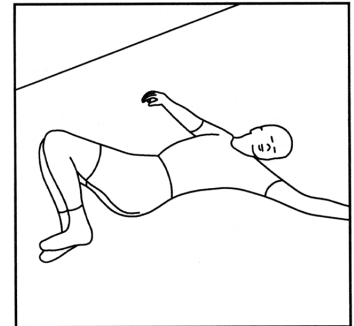
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## Spinal Twist

1. Arms straight out to your sides with thumbs pointing up at the ceiling, feet together and flat on the floor.
2. As you breathe into your belly, slowly do these three movements simultaneously: (Fig 5)
  - Allow your knees (staying together) to fall over to one side
  - Turn your head and neck to the opposite side
  - Roll your arms and hands to turn palm up on the side your head is facing, palm down on your knee side. You can keep turning arms & hands past these points to create a gentle diagonal stretch across your chest.
3. As you breathe out, slowly do these three movements simultaneously:
  - Bring your knees (staying together) back up to center.
  - Turn your head and neck back to center.
  - Roll your arms and hands back to neutral, with thumbs pointing toward the ceiling.
4. Slowly repeat sequence to the opposite side. (Fig 6)
5. Repeat steps 2-4 for a total of about 4-8 cycles.



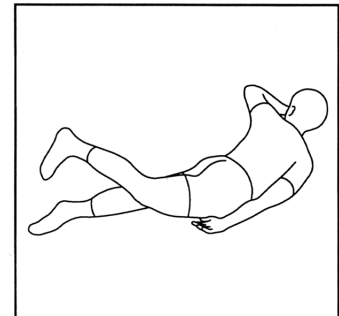
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## Lift-Ups

1. Lie on your stomach, with feet slightly apart, face turned to your left with cheek resting on the back of your left fingers, right arm resting along your side.
2. Breathe in as you simultaneously do these three movements: (Fig 7)
  - Lift your left elbow, shoulder, arm, hand, head and torso (all together as one unit).
  - Bend your torso to the left as you lift, like you're "swooping" up and out to your left.
  - Lift your right leg off the floor, keeping your right knee nearly straight.
3. Exhale as you slowly lower your body back to the floor, retracing your path. Rest here a second to fully relax your muscles.
4. Slowly repeat this sequence 3-5 times. Ensure the arm along your side remains relaxed.
5. Now do the same sequence on the opposite side, with your head turned to your right, lifting your left leg.
6. Repeat on the right 3-5 times.



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You may find this to be more effective when performed first thing in the morning and just before bed at night. For best results, do them twice a day (at these times or whenever possible). They are very relaxing, and are a great way to start and end your day, especially if accompanied by a short meditation.

*Consider the time you spend doing this (and other self-nurturing things) as a gift to yourself.*