

Fitness **Pilates** *Back Care*

Fitness Pilates Back Care Manual *by Rachel Holmes and Kelly Reed*

Welcome to Fitness Pilates Back Care

This programme has been designed to reduce current back pain, postural imbalances and reduce inflammation which maybe causing other symptoms. FP Back care is not a form of physiotherapy and is not appropriate for anyone who has diagnosed back issues. Once you have been cleared to exercise then this programme will take you through a step by step guide over 8 weeks to improve core stability, spinal flexibility and postural enhancement.

This programme is also great for anyone suffering with general aches and pains caused back lack of activity, who is looking to get back into an exercise programme but can't get to a physical class.

We will require you to fill out a health questionnaire and an informed consent form to make sure you are fit for this programme and that you understand that with any home exercise programme, you are taking yourself solely responsible for your workouts and to listen to your body throughout the programme.

Anybody who has suffered with a diagnosed back problem will be required to supply a doctors or Physio note to state you have been cleared to exercise.

We understand that each person is different and there are many different reasons for chronic back pain... Have you experienced a sudden injury, or has your back pain slowly crept in due to repetitive strain, poor posture, or muscle imbalance? The type of back pain problem matters for exercise selection. (bulging disc, degenerative disc disease, spinal stenosis, spondylolisthesis, SI joint instability, scoliosis, sciatica.) There is not a one-exercise-fits-all solution so this is where if you do have any of the above we recommend that you find a qualified Pilates specialist who can work with you on a 1-2-1 basis.

Kick Start Back Care takes a holistic approach to enhancing posture, core strength and reducing aches and pains by reducing and cutting out common foods that are known to cause inflammation. Cutting out sugar, wheat, gluten & dairy products

will see a huge impact on inflammation resulting in you feeling healthier, stronger mentally and physically.

Getting your nutrition on track will help your mental well-being, help you feel positive, sleep better improve energy levels and help you feel alive and more vibrant.

Couple that with a structured 8 week exercise programme of 10 minute per day will see your back strength improve, enhance core stability, spinal flexibility, & postural enhancement.

The FP Back Pain takes you from the very basics in week 1 to slowly and steadily improvements every week.

We will be supporting you with 10 minute daily Pilates/ Stretch/ Mobility exercises as well as motivational audio's, clean eating recipes which work in conjunction with Kick Start elimination programme to reduce inflammation. We will be asking you to keep a pain diary to reflect on how you are feeling physically and mentally over the 8 week course.

Within this Back Care pack you also get extra information about tips to reduce pain, improve strength and mobility as well and causes of back issues, lack of mobility and strength and general questions and answers. Each video also has a worksheet within this pack to help you improve your own performance and body awareness.

Action Plan

For your first step on improving your back health, please complete the health questionnaire and informed consent form and send back to your KSFL health coach

Secondly please answer the questions about where you are right now and your pain diary for day 1 week.

Thirdly read through the information and watch the videos and audio's and read through the elimination manual. Within the elimination manual it asks you to complete a Fitness Test - This is not for you on this Back Care programme so please just ignore this

and focus on using this manual for your nutrition information and recipe ideas.

Finally start the programme! We wish you all the very best for the next 8 weeks and are so excited that you have chosen to embark on this Kick Start Back Care programme.

Risk factors associated with low back pain

Risk factors can be categorized into non-modifiable and modifiable factors. However, it should be appreciated that back pain is multifactorial, and in most cases it cannot be attributed to the presence of one single factor, but is most likely caused by multiple risk factors.

Non-Modifiable risk factors include -

Increasing age

Number of children

Previous episodes of low back pain A major scoliosis (Haldeman, 2005)

Modifiable risk factors include -

Lack of Fitness/ Physical activity (Balague, 1999) Smoking (Power et al, 2001)

Obesity (Fransen et al, 2002)

Psychosocial stress (Van den Heuvel et al, 2004) Physical Trauma (Harkness et al, 2003)

Awkward Posture at work (Hoogendoorn et al, 2000)

Frequent bending and twisting (Van den Heuvel et al, 2004)

Heavy lifting, repetitive lifting (Harkness et al 2003)

Jarring, gripping, vibratio, repetitive actions (Levangie, 1999)

Prolonged sitting and prolonged standing (Thorbjornsson et al 2000)

The FP Back Care programme will hopefully identify and positively influence the modifiable risk factors.

We also understand that musculoskeletal injury can occur when there is an increase in frequency, duration and intensity of activity

and the type of activity you do. The risk can therefore be reduced by adjusting these variables and exercising at low to moderate intensity. Which is why each daily session is based a level to cater for your needs and you have adaptations and progressions that you can choose to take should you wish to make it easier or harder.

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Age

Key Factors

Beyond 30 years of age there is a decrease in the size and quality of collagen fibres within the musculoskeletal system.

Consequently, muscles, ligaments and cartilage are more prone to injury (Jackson, 1999)

Misaligned Bones & Joints

Lower back injury and pain can significantly affect an individual's ability to perform simple daily activities and when we can address their functional ability, we can then see if problems with posture or lifestyle habits are actually causing dysfunction which then as a result is causing the pain.

Misalignment in bones and joints places increased stress on the tissues surrounding the joints. Muscle imbalance occurs when a particular muscle shortens & then its antagonist is over stretched and lengthened, the reason for this can be overload, misuse, disuse & trauma. When this happens neither the agonist nor the antagonist will perform functionally or biomechanically very well!

This will then result on other muscles compensating and also displacement on bones due to the different pull they are receiving from the muscles and then affecting joint movement so all of this needs to be taken in to consideration in order not to result in further or deeper pain.

Excessive body weight

This results in a greater compressive force on joints, leading to a greater potential for damage to these joints and their surrounding soft tissues

Diet

When people think about ways to manage back pain, nutrition is not the first thing that comes to mind. But what you eat impacts your back health. “Nourishing your body with foods that reduce inflammation can really help you feel better much sooner,” says Amy Jamieson-Petonic, RD, director of wellness coaching at the Cleveland Clinic. Once again, good nutrition to the rescue!

We usually think of inflammation as swelling – as in, you twist your ankle and it becomes swollen and it hurts. Inflammation is actually one of your body’s defence mechanisms to protect from infection and foreign substances. However, sometimes the protective response becomes chronic and, for one reason or another, is triggered when there are no infections to fight off. For example, foods high in saturated fats, trans fats, simple sugars and white flour actually trigger inflammation throughout our bodies through a complex series of biochemical and hormonal processes. Left unchecked, inflammation runs rampant through your body, causing all kinds of problems – including arthritis (an inflammation of your joints) and, believe it or not, low back pain.

Sudden start of hard exercise.

This particularly applies to individuals who have been inactive and then suddenly prescribed a vigorous programme of exercise.

Warm up

WHY DO WE NEED TO WARM UP?

We need to warm up prior to activity to prepare all the bodily systems for the activity that will follow.

Warming up will potentially enhance our performance and may reduce the risk of injury. A thorough warm up should therefore

help to maximise the safety and effectiveness of the activity. It is therefore essential that appropriate time is set aside for warming up before the main workout commences. It is also essential that the correct exercises are selected.

WHAT TYPE OF EXERCISES SHOULD I DO?

The warm up should contain exercises which:

- Promote the release of synovial fluid into the joint capsule and warm the tendons, muscles and ligaments which surround each joint. This will ensure the joints are adequately lubricated and cushioned, and will allow a fuller range of motion to be achieved at each joint. This can be achieved by mobility exercises within each of your warm up video's
- Increase the heart rate, promote an increase of blood flow to the muscles and an increase in the delivery of oxygen. This will make the body warmer, the muscles more pliable and will allow them to work more comfortably throughout the main workout. This can be achieved by pulse raising exercises within each of your warm up video's.
- Lengthen the muscles and move them through a larger range of motion. This will allow them to contract more effectively in the main workout and may lower the risk of injury if moving into extended positions in the main workout. This can be achieved by static or range of motion stretching exercises within each warm up video.
- Activate the brain and neuromuscular pathways, focusing attention and concentration. Rehearsing skills and movement patterns, rehearsing the muscle and joint actions. The intensity we recommend you would be working at is lower initially and would build progressively

From: Lawrence, D (2004) The Complete Guide to Exercise to Music

By not understanding the purpose of the warm up or not completing it before each session that you do on this programme is putting you and your body at risk of injury and possibly making current situations worse, not better.

You have eight 5min warm ups to choose from which progressively increase mobility, flexibility and prepare the body for your workout. We cover Set up on each Warm up video but here is a break down which covers all eight warm ups

Set Up: Begin standing in barefoot. Align feet, knees, hips, pelvis, ribs, arms, shoulders, neck and head. Introduce lateral breathing for relaxation and a focus tool.

Mobility warm up - complete 8 repetitions of each move

Neck stretch and circles,

circle shoulders, increase to full arm circles,

Single arm raise,

side bends,

Swoop for chest and back mobility

Pedal push feet,

standing toe taps forwards/side/behind - increase this to leg swing forwards, side and behind

Knee Raise

Knee Raise with opposite hand

Standing spine twist with hands in Cossack pose - change leading arm over after every 2x

Reach arm on diagonal

Reach arm low behind you

Wrap arms around waist and swing Pilates Squat

Half Roll Down

Full Roll Down to floor into Cat Stretch

Please make sure that you complete the warm up before each session and then finish with the suggested stretch session for that week.

Back Care - Main Sessions

So for the next 8 weeks we will be taking you through a series of daily 10min videos which will help to stretch out tight muscles effecting your lower back, strengthen lapsed muscles which might be putting a strain on the muscles in the back and pelvis and also improving your overall posture & flexibility to support your core strength.

You also have motivational audio clips to help you stay on track throughout this course and of course you have the Kick Start Fat Loss Elimination plan to follow which is designed to reduce inflammation around the back and stomach which may be causing you pain and discomfort.

You have 5x daily videos to work through per week which all have been designed to give you the most benefit of this programme, they all cover different positions to exercise or stretch in, including laying on your back (Supine), On your side, on all fours, seated (sometimes using an exercise ball) and also standing.

As I have stated earlier within this manual, you have 8 warm up video's as well as 8 cool down video's to complete before and after each session so all together each session will be approx. 20mins.

We have written out each main session with the main teaching points covered on each video so you can use this for extra guidance.

What to expect

In week 1 we will start very basic with moves that will help you identify tightness, any imbalances and also mobility ranges. Work to your level and remember to listen to your body throughout. Never do anything that causes you acute pain.

Some of the moves may cause a light discomfort as you are using muscles again you may not have used for a while and also when stretching you should stretch to the point of mild discomfort. You should also be aware that you may experience something called DOMS (Delayed Onset of Muscles Soreness). This is where you may experience a slight soreness in the muscles you have used a couple of days after you have done the exercises, this is just where you have worked muscles you may not have used before or in a long time, it will feel like a dull ache and you may get this in your back and your abdominals to start, it's nothing to worry about and normally goes within a couple of days. The best thing to do to relieve it is to get moving - take a walk, swim, cycle or complete the warm up video again and then stretch out using the cool down video. Your body will get use to the exercises and then start to get stronger and more flexible over the 8 weeks.

Before you start

Before you start this programme with us we need to know where you are right now with regards to your mind set, why you have signed up for this programme and what you are hoping to achieve from it. This will also help you, when it comes to your self-reflection at the end of the course to see if you are on the right track to achieving your goals. These questions are also in your Elimination Manual which you will be following for your nutrition.

Please answer the following -

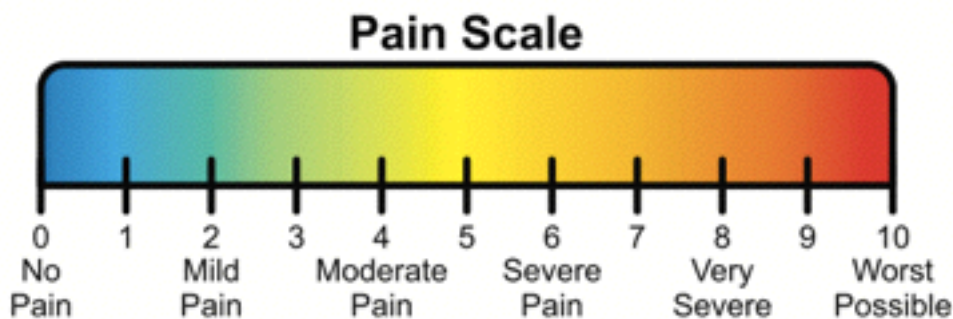
1. How do you feel right now? How is your self-esteem and confidence?
2. What are your expectations for the next 8 weeks?
3. What do you hope to achieve in the next 8 weeks?
4. What are your 5 fitness, weight loss and food goals right now?
5. How is your current nutrition, body image and diet?
6. How are your stress levels?
7. Do you get good quality sleep and how much?

8. Do you eat processed foods, coffee/tea and fruit daily? If so what are the quantity?

Pain Diary

Here is your pain diary to keep a track of how your back is feeling on a day to day basis. Please use the chart to record the number that relates to how you are feeling with regards to your back and also how you are feeling with regards to the rest of your body and your mind set.

Week 1



Day

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Back pain

The rest of the body pain

The Exercises

Session & exercise

How to do it

Tips

1. Lying on you back - Pelvic Tilt

Purpose - Core Strength and lower back release

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Rest your head and arms on the floor Push your lower back into the floor, feeling your abdominals tighten

Try to tilt your pelvis upwards, curling just your very lower back & pelvis from the floor

Release the contraction and allow lower back to come off the floor slightly in a controlled manner Complete this exercise 8-10 times then bring the knees into the chest to release and repeat if you feel you want to

Try to breath naturally throughout this exercise Increase range of motion gradually each time you perform it

2. Cat stretch on all fours

Purpose - Stretch lower back

Place knees under hips and hands under shoulders

Slowly curl spine up to ceiling, tucking your chin on chest and head under Breath naturally as you do this and pull the

abdominals in as your curl up Release back to a neutral position and repeat 8-10 times

After each block of 8-10 exercises, push back into a shell pose position (as shown on the video) to release the wrists and knees but also stretch the back

Breath naturally and try to distribute the weight evenly between the hands and the knees

Push back into shell earlier if required

3. Side lying - Clam

Purpose - Open hips and inner thighs as well as strengthen glute muscles

Lie on your side with your head resting in your hand or lay flat down, head resting in arm

Bend the knees and place feet together

Pull abdominals in and breath naturally

Slowly open top knee to ceiling, keeping feet together

Squeeze the muscles in your bottom (glute muscles) as you open and push the knee open as far as you can go without rocking backwards

Release knee back down and lightly press into other leg

Repeat 8-10 times and then roll on to back, hugging knees into chest before tuning on other side

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Do not squeeze glutes if you are suffering with sciatica, just use this as a hip release Repeat as many times as you feel comfortable with but make sure you do even amounts right and left

4. Seated Sciatica release stretch

Purpose - To stretch the hips & back and relieve sciatic pain

Sit with your legs out in front of you and use a block or pillow if needed Cross right leg over left and pull the right knee in with the left hand and pull into you

Place your right hand behind you and turn to look back at it
Hold for 8-10 seconds and then change sides

Repeat 8-10 times and then place soles of feet together and fold forward over them to release

Feel free to hold each stretch for longer if needed Breath out as you turn back

5. Standing spine twist

Purpose - Increase flexibility of thoracic spine

Stand with feet hip width apart, pull in your abdominal muscles and focus on keeping hip bones facing forwards Place hands and arms in a Cossack position with right hand on top of left arm

Shoulders are away from ears and neck is long

Rotate slowly to the right just moving from the back, keeping hips faced forwards then to the left

Then repeat with the left hand on top Take the head round with you as you go

Repeat Right and left for 16 repetitions

Release by talking legs further apart and letting the arms swing and hips rotate gently from right to left

Keep the abdominals pulled in as you move

Only turn as far as it feels natural, never force this stretch

Week 2

In week 2 we will be focusing on increasing the mobility gained in week 1, at any time you can go back to the exercises in week 1 if you feel you need to or if you'd like to do week 1 & 2 together you can in this second week.

You have a new warm up and cool down for this week and don't forget to fill out your pain diary as well.

Day

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Back pain

The rest of the body pain

The Exercises

Session & exercise

How to do it

Tips

1. Lying on you back - Pelvic Tilt into shoulder Bridge

Purpose - Core Strength and lower back release

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Rest your head and arms on the floor Push your lower back into the floor, feeling your abdominals tighten

Try to tilt your pelvis upwards, curling just your very lower back & pelvis from the floor as you did in week 1, but then start to curl up higher, coming up vertebrae by Vertebrae into full shoulder bridge.

Only come up as high as a ski slope shape and then articulate the spine down to the floor vertebrae by vertebrae

Complete this exercise 8-10 times then bring the knees into the chest to release and repeat if you feel you want to

Try to breath naturally throughout this exercise Increase range of motion gradually each time you perform it

Add in arm line if you wish to progress as shown in the video

2. Sexy Cat stretch on all fours

Purpose - Stretch lower back

Place knees under hips and hands under shoulders
Slowly curl spine up to ceiling, tucking your chin on chest and head under
Breathe naturally as you do this and pull the abdominals in as your curl up as in week 1 and then 'wag your tail like a cat' to really release that lower back
Release back to a neutral position and repeat 8-10 times

After each block of 8-10 exercises, push back into a shell pose position (as shown on the video) to release the wrists and knees but also stretch the back

Breathe naturally and try to distribute the weight evenly between the hands and the knees
Push back into shell earlier if required

3. Side lying - Open door

Purpose - release tension in the shoulders, upper back and lower back

Lie on your side, in a foetal position, with your head resting in arm or with your under arm laying out in front of you and your head on a cushion

Bend the knees and place feet together & knees together - keep these still

Pull abdominals in and breathe naturally

Slowly open the top arm into an open door move to reach back behind you as far as you can go

Take the head round with you as you go so you follow your hand with your eye line.

Repeat 8-10 times and then roll on to back, hugging knees into chest before tuning on other side

If this feels ok in the shoulder, then make a rainbow shape with the hand and arm around the top of the head and back Repeat as many times as you feel comfortable with but make sure you do even amounts right and left

4. Seated hamstring release stretch

Purpose - To stretch the back of the legs and lower back out

Sit with your legs out in front of you and use a block or pillow if needed under your bottom

Extend your right leg out to the side and have your left foot tucked in to you or in a relaxed position.

Use a belt, tie, strap or band around the right foot and slowly lean over the right leg feeling a stretch in the back of the leg

Flex your foot and hold for 8-10 seconds, then turn the toes out and repeat and turn the toes in and repeat.

Repeat 8-10 times and then place soles of feet together and fold forward over them to release

Feel free to hold each stretch for longer if needed

Breathe out as you turn back The closer your hands are to your foot the deeper the stretch

5. Standing Roll Down - to half way or full

Purpose - Increase flexibility of spine

Stand with feet hip width apart, pull in your abdominal muscles and focus on relaxing your neck and head

Drop your chin onto your chest and then let the weight of your head bring you over in a controlled manner - Vertebrae by Vertebrae

Let the arms relax and your hands walk down your legs as far as it feels comfortable

Keep the knees bent if there is any pressure or discomfort in the lower back, otherwise gradually straighten the legs and go down as far as you feel comfortable

When you get down as far as you wish to, take a deep breath and slowly roll back up, vertebrae by vertebrae, standing tall and rolling shoulders back a couple of times

Repeat 8-16 times

Release by standing tall, talking legs further apart and letting the arms swing and hips rotate gently from right to left

Keep the abdominals pulled in as you move

Only go down as far as it feels natural, never force this stretch

Week 3

This week we are going to be starting to introduce some strength exercises to aim to increase core strength now you have gained more mobility. Make sure you always complete the new warm up and cool down with each video and feel free to do these alongside any of them from week 1 or 2.

Remember to always listen to your body and stop when you are tired. If you feel you cannot keep the abdominal muscles tense and tight then stop and rest, you can always join back in again when you feel ready. Don't forget to complete your pain diary as well.

Day

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Back pain

The rest of the body pain

The Exercises

Session & exercise

How to do it

Tips

1. Lying on you back - single leg tap down

Purpose - Core Strength

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Rest your head and arms on the floor Bring your back into a neutral position as shown on the video

Brace/ tense your abdominals and lift one leg into table top position, hold for 10 seconds and then change legs Complete this exercise 8-10 times then bring the knees into the chest to release and repeat if you feel you want to

If you feel you can progress this, lift one leg up to table top and then the other as shown on the video and then lower the first leg and lower the second

Try to breath naturally throughout this exercise

Take your arms wide like a scarecrow if you find you are holding tension in your chest

If you feel your back change from its neutral position then rest

2. Superman on all fours

Purpose - back & glute strength

Place knees under hips and hands under shoulders

Create a table position with your body, paying special attention to your lumbar spine - bring this into a neutral position as shown on the video

Tense the abdominals and relax the neck and head

Start by lifting alternating arms and see how this feels in your abdominals, making sure it doesn't change your alignment. Repeat 10 times

Then lift alternating legs to hip height and again see how that feels and the impact it has on your alignment. Repeat 10 times

Only if you can keep the alignment, breath and abdominals braced do you move on to opposite arm to leg lift otherwise stay with just arms on their own and legs on their own

After each block of 8-10 exercises, push back into a shell pose position (as shown on the video) to release the wrists and knees but also stretch the back

Breath naturally and try to distribute the weight evenly between the hands and the knees

Do not list any higher than shoulder and hip height Push back into shell earlier if required

3. Side lying - Leg rotation

Purpose - Strengthen glutes and outer thigh muscles

Lie on your side with your head resting in arm or with your under arm laying out in front of you and your head on a cushion

Tuck your bottom leg in front of you as shown on the video or extend out along the floor and stack your hips on top of each other

Pull abdominals in away from the mat on the side of your waist and breath naturally

Use the top arm for support in front of you

Circle the top leg around one way and then the other, start in small circles and only progress bigger if you feel you can without changing alignment Repeat 8-10 times forwards and backwards before you roll on to back, hugging knees into chest before tuning on other side

Breath naturally as you do this

Do not complete this exercise if you are suffering with sciatica caused by an impingement on the nerve Repeat as many times as you feel comfortable with but make sure you do even amounts right and left

4. Seated Mermaid stretch

Purpose - To stretch sides of waist and hips

Sit with your legs around in a mermaid position as shown on the video or extend one leg out if necessary and use a block or pillow if needed under your bottom

Place hand to the side and gently lean over to side

Repeat on the other side

Repeat 10 times and then place soles of feet together and fold forward over them to release before you change legs to the other side

Feel free to hold each stretch for longer if needed Breathe naturally

If you require a deeper hip flexor stretch, then lift hip as shown on video

5. Standing superman

Purpose - Increase balance and coordination

Stand with feet hip width apart, pull in your abdominal muscles and focus on relaxing your neck and head

Start by lifting alternating knee lift while keeping your abdominals pulled in, make sure when you lower your foot it goes back hip distant not too close

Add in opposite arm if this feels ok, repeat 16 times

If you'd like to progress - stay on one side and touch hand to knee and then push away without letting your foot hit the floor, complete 4-8 repetitions before changing sides

Release by standing tall, taking legs further apart and letting the arms swing and hips rotate gently from right to left

Keep the abdominals pulled in as you move

Feel free to use a wall for support

Week 4

In this week we are going to progress some of the moves in week 3 and introduce new ones to increase core strength further but remember to listen to your body and as soon as your alignment starts to fail or if you start holding your breath, it's time to rest and recover. You can always go back to week 3 moves or add in any of the moves from week 1 or 2 into this week as well.

Remember to complete your new warm up and cool down for this week as well as complete your pain diary.

Day

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Back pain

The rest of the body pain

The Exercises

Session & exercise

How to do it

Tips

1. Lying on you back - Table Top Tap downs

Purpose - Core Strength

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Rest your head and arms on the floor Bring your back into a neutral position as shown on the video

Brace/ tense your abdominals and lift one leg into table top position, with your knee over your hip bone

Tap this foot down to the floor and back up to start position 4-8 times and then change legs

Complete this exercise equally left and right side, then bring the knees into the chest to release and repeat if you feel you want to

If you feel you can progress this, complete this exercise with both legs lifted to table top

Try to breath naturally throughout this exercise

Take your arms wide like a scarecrow if you find you are holding tension in your chest

If you feel your back change from its neutral position then rest or go back to the exercise in week 3

2. Prone lying swimming

Purpose - back & glute strength

Lay flat down on your front

Tense the abdominals & glute muscles and relax the neck and head

Lift alternating arm to leg, focusing on how far you can stretch rather than on how high you can lift

Keep head and hip bones on the floor After each block of 8-10 exercises, push back into a shell pose position (as shown on the video) to stretch the back

If you want to progress this move then you can lift your chest up as well but keep looking down to the mat

Breath naturally

Do not complete this exercise with the back extension if you have been told not to do any extension work due to bulging disc, spondylosis in the lumbar region or stepped vertebrae

Push back into shell earlier if required

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3. Side lying - Leg abduction

Purpose - Strengthen glutes and outer thigh muscles

Lie on your side with your head resting in arm or with your under arm laying out in front of you and your head on a cushion

Tuck your bottom leg in front of you as shown on the video or extend out along the floor and stack your hips on top of each other

Pull abdominals in away from the mat on the side of your waist and breath naturally

Use the top arm for support in front of you

Lift and lower the top leg to shoulder height only with your toes pointed downwards

Repeat 8-10 times before you rest your top leg down in front of you and stretch the outer thigh, repeat if you feel you want to or

roll on to back, hugging knees into chest before tuning on other side

Breath naturally as you do this

Do not complete this exercise if you are suffering with sciatica caused by an impingement on the nerve Repeat as many times as you feel comfortable with but make sure you do even amounts right and left

4. Seated half roll back

Purpose - To strengthen core

Sit with your legs bent in front of you with a strap, tie or band around your feet as shown in the video and use a block or pillow if needed under your bottom

Brace your abdominals and sit tall, taking a hold of the band Relax your shoulders and gently tilt your pelvis under to make a C shape position of your spine

Feel the abdominals tighten as you go back and keep this contraction in the abs

Gently lift back up to sitting

Repeat 10 times and then place soles of feet together and fold forward over them to release the back

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Feel free to hold each stretch for longer if needed

Breath naturally

Move feet further away as shown on the video if required

This move should be smooth and controlled Make sure your heels stay in contact with the floor at all times

5. Standing Pilates Squat to lift

Purpose - Increase balance and Glute strength

Stand with feet hip width apart, pull in your abdominal muscles and focus on relaxing your neck and head

Squat down into a Pilates Squat, lifting your toes up and keeping your knees in line with your feet and hips

As you stand up, squeeze the muscles in your glutes and lift up to a balance Repeat 10-16 times

Release by standing tall, taking legs further apart and letting the arms swing and hips rotate gently from right to left

Keep the abdominals pulled in as you move

Feel free to use a wall for support

Week 5

As we now come into week 5 of this back care programme we are ready to do a bit of release work for the feet with Tennis Balls so you will see your warm up this week is using the tennis balls under the feet and then your main exercises use a resistance band - You can use a tie or a strap if you do not have a band.

As always, listen to your body and rest whenever you feel you are losing your ABC (alignment, Breath, Centring)

Always complete the warm up and cool down for each video and complete your pain diary.

Day

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Back pain

The rest of the body pain

The Exercises

Session & exercise

How to do it

Tips

1. Lying on you back - single leg circle with band

Purpose - Core Strength & hip mobility

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Rest your head and neck on the floor Bring your back into a neutral position as shown on the video

Brace/ tense your abdominals and lift one leg up with the band around the foot

Circle the leg around in small circles to start both directions, holding the band

Try to keep your other hip still and in contact with the floor
Complete this exercise equally left and right side, then bring the knees into the chest to release and repeat if you feel you want to

If you feel you can progress this, complete this exercise with the other leg extended out along the floor or up in table top position

Try to breath naturally throughout this exercise

Take your other arm wide like a scarecrow if you find you are holding tension in your chest

If you feel your back change from its neutral position then rest

2. kneeling Thread like a needle

Purpose - Thoracic mobility

Place knees under hips and hands under shoulders, then sit back just slightly

Tense the abdominals and relax the neck and head

Place your band under one hand and take the other end in your other hand Lift the arm and hand up to the ceiling, stretching band but keeping the hips still, then lace the arm and hand through the other arm - threading like a needle

After each block of 8-10 exercises, push back into a shell pose position (as shown on the video) to stretch the back

This move can be completed without the band

Breath naturally

Keep the moves smooth and controlled, without moving your hips

Push back into shell earlier if required

3. Side lying - Clam with band

Purpose - Strengthen glutes and outer thigh muscles

Lie on your side with your head resting in your hand or lay flat down, head resting in arm

Bend the knees and place feet together, with the band tied in a loop around the thighs

Pull abdominals in and breath naturally

Slowly open top knee to ceiling, keeping feet together

Squeeze the muscles in your bottom (glute muscles) as you open and push the knee open as far as you can go without rocking backwards

Release knee back down and lightly press into other leg

Repeat 8-10 times and then roll on to back, hugging knees into chest before tuning on other side

Breath naturally as you do this

Do not complete this exercise if you are suffering with sciatica caused by an impingement on the nerve Repeat as many times as you feel comfortable with but make sure you do even amounts right and left

4. Seated spine twist with band

Purpose - To mobilise back

Sit in a comfortable position on your sit bones, feel free to use a block or cushion if necessary

Place band behind your back and take both ends in your hands

Stretch arms out at shoulder height with palms down to start

Keep abdominals tight and back long Keeping the band taught

then rotate to the right, taking head round with you, gently bring it back to centre and change to left

Repeat with palms facing forwards and then facing up whilst holding the band Repeat 5 times in each hand position Fold forwards to release

Breathe naturally Only go round as far as it feels comfortable Never force a stretch

5. Standing VW with Pilates Squat

Purpose - Increase upper back and Glute strength

Stand with feet hip width apart, pull in your abdominal muscles and focus on relaxing your neck and head

Take arms above head holding the band in a V position

As you pull arms down into a W position, Squat down into a Pilates Squat, lifting your toes up and keeping your knees in line with your feet and hips

As you stand up, squeeze the muscles in your glutes and lift arms back to the V

Repeat 10-16 times

Release by standing tall, taking legs further apart and letting the arms swing and hips rotate gently from right to left

Keep the abdominals pulled in as you move

Feel free to use a wall for support

Week 6

You now should be feeling a lot stronger within your core muscles (the muscles that run from your shoulders to below your pelvis) and more flexible in your body as a whole.

Your Warm up with week focuses on flowing moves to really get your joints and muscles warm with balance work to wake up your core muscles and for your cool down we will be using a foam roller to really release any tension within the muscles. This week the main exercises are all floor work that enhance strength for all the muscles that support the back

Day

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Back pain

The rest of the body pain

The Exercises

Session & exercise

How to do it

Tips

1. Lying on you back - knee drop

Purpose - Core Strength and hip release

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Rest your head and arms on the floor. Bring your back into neutral position as shown on the video and arms wide like a scarecrow

Lift one leg up at a time into table top position

Keeping one leg and hip still, take the other knee out to the side as far as you can go, keeping your abdominals tight and the other hip still

Come back to centre and swap sides. Complete this exercise 8-10 times each side then bring the knees into the chest to release and repeat if you feel you want to

Try to breathe naturally throughout this exercise. Increase range of motion gradually each time you perform it

2. Laying prone - VW

Purpose - Back strength

Lay flat down on your front

Tense the abdominals & glute muscles and relax the neck and head

Lift arms over head in a V position, pull back into a W, squeezing the muscles in your upper back together. Keep head and hip bones on the floor to start and only progress to lifting chest off into a back extension if you feel strong enough and can keep your ABC. After each block of 8-10 exercises, push back into a shell pose position (as shown on the video) to stretch the back

If you want to progress this move then you can lift your chest up as well but keep looking down to the mat

Breathe naturally and keep neck in line with spine. Push back into shell earlier if required

3. Laying on your back - Knee Roll

Purpose - back mobility and core strength

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Rest your head and arms on the floor. Bring your back into neutral position as shown on the video and arms wide like a scarecrow, tense the abdominals. Come up on to your toes and gradually roll knees over to side, keeping your shoulders down into the floor.

Bring the knees back to centre and repeat other side.

If this feels ok, you can progress this to extending the top leg, as shown in the video as you go over, or bring legs into table top and roll without crashing.

Complete 8-10 repetitions before bringing your knees into chest and releasing the lower back.

This move should be slow and controlled and keep abdominals in the whole time. **Please keep feet on the floor if you have recently had a diagnosed back problem but have been cleared to exercise by your physio.** Breathe naturally.

4. Prone lying - Square

Purpose - Thoracic strength and mobility

Lay flat down on your front.

Tense the abdominals & glute muscles and relax the neck and head.

Lift arms over head in a square position, elbows out at shoulder height, squeezing the muscles in your upper back together as you turn to the side and lift one arm up to the ceiling, take head round with you as you go. Repeat to other side.

Keep hip bones on the floor to start and only progress to lifting chest off into a back extension if you feel strong enough and can keep your ABC.

After each block of 8-10 exercises, push back into a shell pose position (as shown on the video) to stretch the back.

If you want to progress this move then you can lift your chest up as well but keep looking down to the mat

Breath naturally Keep other elbow/arm on the floor Progress to an aeroplane position with arms if you want to

5. Shoulder bridge with hip opener

Purpose - Increase flexibility of spine & hips

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Rest your head and arms on the floor Push your lower back into the floor, feeling your abdominals tighten, place one foot across the other knee and focus on keeping hip bones level and pushing this knee wide

Try to tilt your pelvis upwards, curling just your very lower back & pelvis from the floor as you did in week 1, but then start to curl up higher, coming up vertebrae by Vertebrae into full shoulder bridge.

Only come up as high as a ski slope shape and then articulate the spine down to the floor vertebrae by vertebrae

Once the coccyx comes to the floor, change legs

Complete this exercise 8-10 times then bring the knees into the chest to release and repeat if you feel you want to

Keep the abdominals pulled in as you move

Feel free to complete normal shoulder bridge if you prefer Keep hip bones level and only come up as high as it feels comfortable
Breath naturally

Week 7

Within this week we are really focusing on standing work to help you with everyday tasks and making sure your body is Fit For Life!

Your warm up includes functional moves and your cool down includes a technique called the MET technique which brings the pelvis into a neutral position - try to complete the Warm up and cool down every day this week even on your rest days off. Don't forget to fill in your pain diary at the end of each workout

Day

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Back pain

The rest of the body pain

The Exercises

Session & exercise

How to do it

Tips

1. Roll down into calf stretch, into catch stretch and back up again

Purpose - Helping you come up and down from the floor

Complete the Roll down as we have been doing in our warm ups and also in week 2

Walk hands out in to a calf stretch position when you get down to the floor

Spread the palms down and bend alternating knee to feel the stretch in the other calf - complete 8 reps

Bend knees down into floor and come into a cat stretch as we did in week 1 or Sexy cat in week 2

Push back into calf stretch and walk hands back to feet/ legs

Slowly Roll back up to standing and take a couple of rotation releases as shown in the video

Try to breath naturally throughout this exercise Increase range of motion gradually each time you perform it Keep knees bent on Roll down if necessary

2. Standing VW with squat into standing superman

Purpose - Back & glute strength, increased balance and coordination

Complete the standing VW as we did in week 5 with a squat, then lift up into standing superman as we did in week 3

So you have put these 2 moves into a little sequence
Focus on control not speed and keep the abdominals tight

Complete 8-10 repetitions, then release
Release by standing tall, taking legs further apart and letting the arms swing and hips rotate gently from right to left

Breathe naturally and keep neck in line with spine After each 8-10 blocks have a rest and then continue if you want

3. Standing back extension

Purpose - back mobility and core strength

Stand with feet hip width apart, pull in your abdominal muscles and focus on relaxing your neck and head
Take one arm above head and lift back into a back extension with the opposite leg squeezing back into a standing glute squeeze

Alternate Right and left

Repeat 10-16 times

Release by standing tall, taking legs further apart and letting the arms swing and hips rotate gently from right to left

This move should be slow and controlled and keep abdominals in the whole time Breathe naturally

4. Standing spine twist into Roll Down

Purpose - Back mobility

Complete standing spine twist as we did in week 1 - rotate right and left then go into one Roll Down
Keep the abdominals tense and remember to alternate the arm on top in your standing spine twist

Keep hip bones facing forwards Only Roll Down as far as it feels comfortable

Breath naturally Focus on control rather than speed

5. Curtsey Squat into knee lift

Purpose - helping you reach to the floor and above the head

Curtsey one leg behind, whilst keeping front knee in alignment with hip and foot

Reach hands downwards as far as you wish to go

Lift the back leg up into a knee lift, raising arms above the head, only come up as high as you feel comfortable

Repeat 8-10 reps on one side before you change sides

At any time you need to rest, release into your standing rotation as shown on the video or Roll Down

Keep the abdominals pulled in as you move

Breath naturally

Focus on control and not speed

If there is any discomfort on the curtsey, then just complete a normal Pilates squat

Week 8

Within week 8 you have longer workouts as we have almost reached the end of our course so you will see that on the videos you are completing a range of exercises from each week.

Your warm up this week includes some mini sequences and your cool down has a deep relaxation section. At the end of this week

please take time to fill out the self- reflection section as well as completing your pain diary every day.

Day

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Back pain

The rest of the body pain

The Exercises

Session & exercise

How to do it

Tips

1. Complete all exercises from week 2

Follow the video for the sequence of these moves but feel free to only do as many as you feel you want to.

Always focus on control rather than speed and listen to your body throughout

Rest anytime you need to Breathe naturally

This week you will be moving like you are more in a Pilates class, so use the self-monitoring tips

2. Complete all the exercises from week 3

As above

3. Complete all the exercises from week 4

As above

4. Complete all exercises from week 5

As above

5. Complete all exercises from week 6

As above

Congratulations

You have successfully completed this 8 week Kick Start Back Care programme, so it's time to reflect on how you are feeling right now!

Please answer the following questions -

1. How do you feel right now? How is your self-esteem and confidence?

2. How do you feel within your body, your flexibility/ mobility and your strength?
3. Did you achieve your goals?
4. What are your 5 fitness, weight loss and food goals right now?
5. How is your current nutrition, body image and diet?
6. How are your stress levels?
7. Do you get good quality sleep and how much?
8. Do you eat processed foods, coffee/tea and fruit daily? If so what are the quantity?

This Back Care programme is designed that it can be repeated as many times as you need to, so if you haven't reached your goals yet you can just start the whole programme again for the next 8 weeks as everyone achieves at different levels and speeds.

We really hope you have enjoyed your journey with us and we wish you all the very best for your health & fitness for the future.

If you have any questions regarding this programme, please do not hesitate to contact your Health Coach or email -

Kelly@choreographytogo.com