

# The Step By Step Process to Fix Your Back Pain Forever

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## The Step By Step Process to Fix Your Back Pain Forever



Around my early 20's I got my first real desk job. I worked in a high school and spent 40+ hours a week sitting down in a chair tutoring students and substitute teaching in New York. Right around this time is when I learned a fun truth about sitting — it's the fastest way to having a back that hurts like hell every day.

I had never previously had back pain in my life — I never had lower back pain, or shoulder issues, or neck pain, but suddenly I started having these pains simultaneously on the majority of my days at work. It didn't always last long, but every day at some point I was experiencing discomfort in my spine.

Sound like you?

The worst part is that when you do get lower back pain, it seems so freaking hard to get rid of. You try adjusting your posture — still hurts.

You try rubbing it or massaging it or stretching out quickly — still hurts.

You try getting up and walking around — ten minutes later, it still hurts.

It's incredibly frustrating.

Fortunately, for most of us (that haven't had our spines injured in an accident or through misuse), the secret ingredient in fixing your back pain lies in one thing: [Fixing our bad habits.](#)

But I know you need back pain relief right now. So this guide is the top 4 most helpful things I've found to alleviate some of the back pain you are experiencing.

I have used every single one of them on an *almost daily basis for 2 years*. I have tried everything, and these are by far the most effective short term fixes I have found. Like I said this list comes from experience, not a quick google search.

These actually work.

## The truth about lower back pain

According to the NIH (National Institute of Health) lower back pain [affects nearly everyone at some point in their life\(!\)](#).

Lower back pain also:

- Is something that Americans spend \$50 billion dollars on annually in physicians visits and rehab
- The #1 cause of job related disability
- The #2 neurological health issue (headaches is #1)

Seeing as how back pain is such an ubiquitous problem, I was a little disappointed when I googled back pain relief, because this is the useless advice I got from just about every website.

Useless guides online to backpain:

- Surgery
- See a chiropractor
- Injections
- Physical Therapy
- Acupuncture
- Herbs
- Yoga

But here's the problem – none of these things you can do yourself, right now (unless you do the usual quick fixes like Aspirin, Ice, Icy/Hot, etc.).

So here's what I'm NOT going to tell you: I'm NOT going to tell you to go see XXX specialist, because that would be useless advice that you should already know. I am not a doctor or qualified medical professional. You should always be seeing them first. There are thousands of other websites telling you to just go see your doctor or a physical therapist. You know you should be doing that.

Instead, these are a few key strategies I've used to reduce the majority of my back pain on a day to day basis, but in my experience these are mostly short term fixes. Check out my epic guide to lower back pain relief ([Part 1](#) & [Part 2](#)) to learn more about how I got rid of most of my back pain on a daily basis.

## Why Cavemen Never Had Back Pain



There were two key things that just about saved my life:

1. Esther Gokhale's 8 Steps to a Pain Free Back
2. The Egoscue Method – Book: Pain Free

Here's what they are in a nutshell:

#1 The Gokhale Method – Why do 90% of North Americans have back pain at some point, while in other countries only 5% of people have back pain?

Esther Gokhale was similar to many back pain sufferers. In college she hurt her back doing yoga poses, which required bedrest for several days.

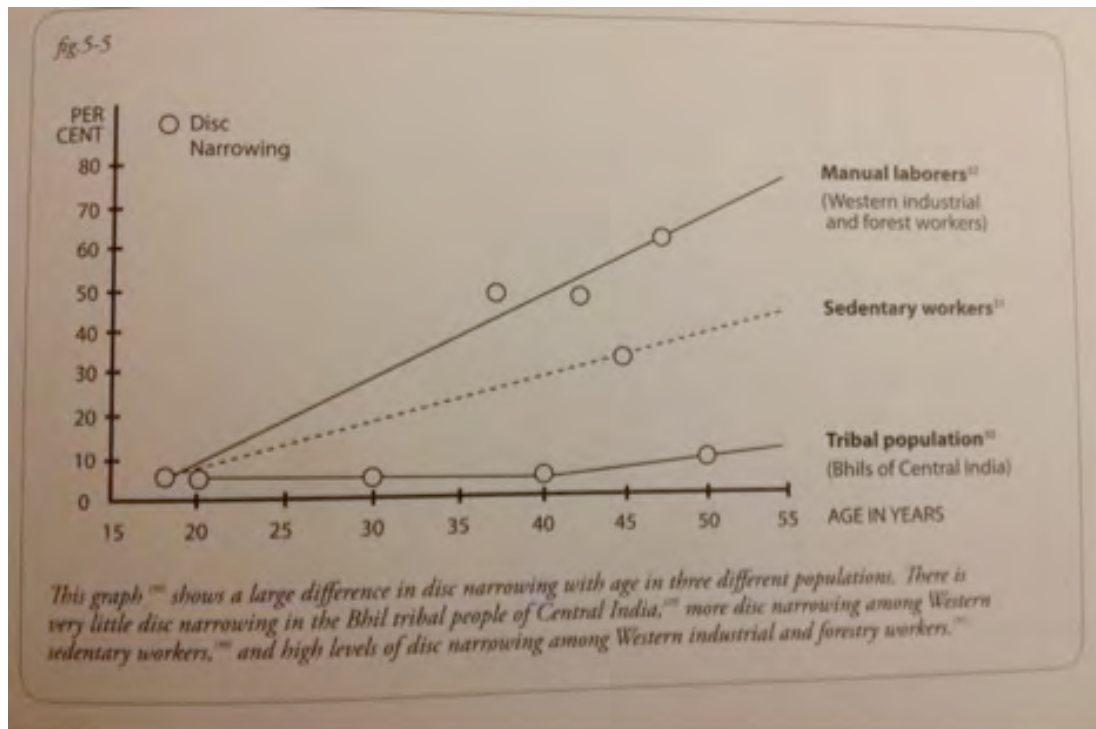
A few years later, she did the same thing again this time requiring up to a week of bed rest. Again, a few years later when she was pregnant with her first child she had an agonizing bout of sciatica — and after the baby was born she underwent surgery for a badly herniated disc. After this point the doctors discouraged her from having another child<sup>1</sup>, and her pain once again returned.

Right around this time is when Gokhale started studying at the Aplomb institute in France, with a teacher who studied how indigenous people move compared to those of us in industrialized nations. Hint: it's way different.

What she discovered is that people in traditional cultures use their bodies much differently — more effectively — and as a result suffer from a fraction of the rate of musculoskeletal pain despite working all day under heavy loads.

You know those African girls carrying baskets on their heads for miles? No back pain. No neck pain. No headaches. They use the body like how it was designed.

Check out this chart comparing workers in the west, versus those in a specific culture of people in central India.



By the age of 50, almost 70% of western folks doing manual labor (and 40% of sedentary workers — people that sit) show signs of disc narrowing. In some of the populations that Gokhale studied (India, for this one), at age 50 it's still less than 10%.

Gokhale is a woman to listen to if you want to be pain-free even in your old age. We'll talk more about her soon.

## #2 The Egoscue method – Chronic Pain: The Modern Danger of Ignoring an Ancient Message

The Egoscue method became famous with celebrity endorsements like Jack Nicklaus and several NFL players — because it works!

The whole premise behind the system is that pain is a warning sign in the body that something is not right (obviously), and the reason for the rise in musculoskeletal issues is because we are living in a motion starved world.

We sit for 40+ hours a week at work, and then many of us sit for another 40+ hours a week at home. 7/10 Americans don't move enough or exercise regularly, and we're paying the price.

The egoscue method revolves around one thing: motion. The body needs regular motion and activity to function properly. Do "frozen shoulders" (where you can't lift your arm above your head) ever happen in kids? Never.

Pete Egoscue found that joint pain (including back pain, headaches, tendinitis, shin splints, foot ailments, etc) is prevalent in people whose joints are not aligned properly and are not bearing weight how they naturally should. Note: for 99% of us, "mis-alignment" occurs from a lifetime of bad habits or lack of physical activity.

Many people will then get X-rays and look at their bones and say "Look! My bones are out of place!" Actually your bones are an indicator of what your muscles are doing – based on muscles that are over-compensating or muscles that are weak.

Just look at any guy who only works out his chest and arms in the gym – he has the gorilla posture – concave chest, hands in front of his body, etc. That's a long-term muscular imbalance created by an imbalanced exercise routine.

The egoscue method has worked on every single thing I've tried it on – chronic knee pain, shoulder pain, headaches, lower back pain, elbow tendinitis (tennis elbow), etc.

The Amazon reviews page of the book has dozens of reviews like this, "Get this now! It works!"

Now that I gave you guys a quick intro let's jump into specifics on each one. I know you want the goods now so you can experience relief.

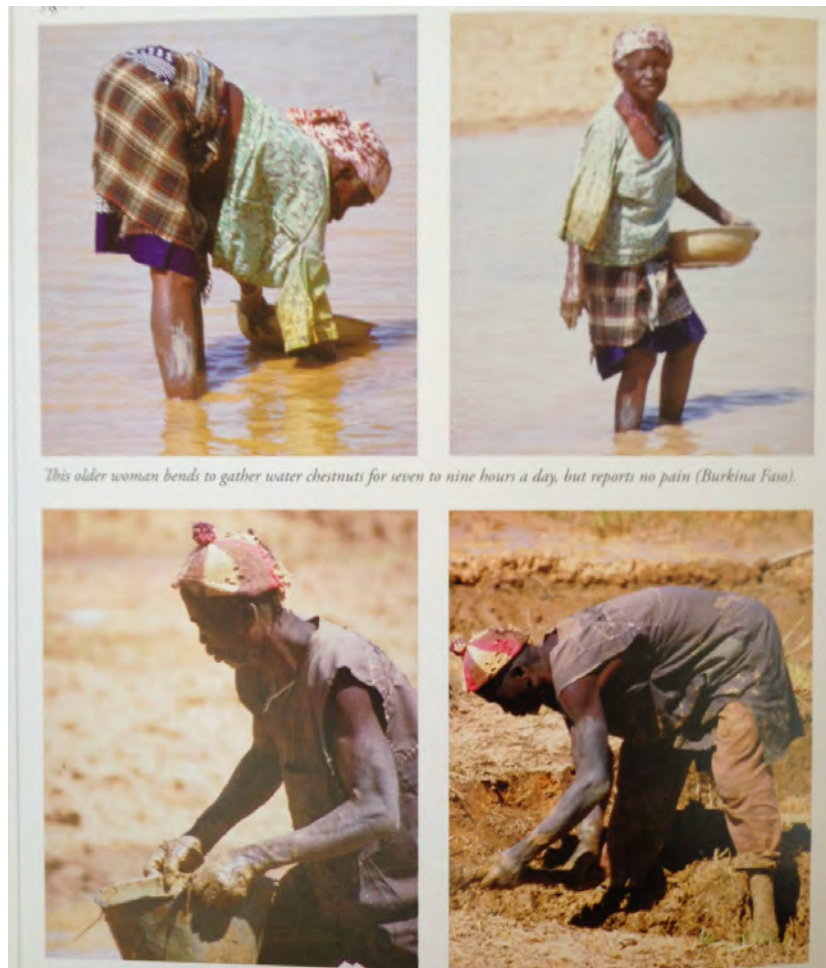
# Gokhale Method 101 – Pocahontas Never Had Back Pain!

## **A. Introduction – Why Pocahontas Never Had Back Pain**

I'm gonna start with the coolest revelation of Gokhale's work: there are many populations where people live painlessly into old age.

Yes, even while doing 10 hours a day of bending or hard manual labor.

Check out these two folks:



According to Gokhale, the older woman on top bends in the water for 7-9 hours a day and reports no back pain. The guy on the bottom works a similarly active job with no negative physical impact.

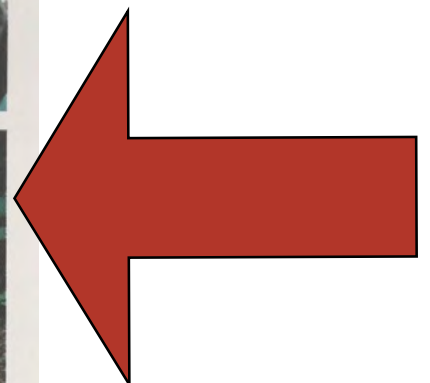
The truth is that there is a very observable difference in how certain cultures use their body compared to most of us.



You know what's even more interesting? Even ancient sculptures show the good posture of people before us — check out this Egyptian statue compared to two random pictures of people:



How about how people today sit compared to indigenous people?



Notice the rounded backs and lack of lower back curve in the pictures of “modern people”



Just by seeing these pictures, it's pretty obvious that there is a clear difference between your daily posture, and what daily pain-free posture looks like, right?

It's tough to know what posture is proper when you're sitting, so I'm gonna give you the introduction to the top 3 things you should know about the Gokhale method:

I'm going to emphasize three things: A. Sitting posture, B. Bending posture, and C. Sleeping posture (back only). I'm assuming these three motions (mostly sitting) make up 95% of your bodily posture during an average 24 hour period, so let's go with the 80/20 rule and get the best return for your time..

## Gokhale Method – Lesson 1 – How to Sit – Stretch sitting

The first sitting method (stretchsitting) revolves around using the back of the chair as support. The second method (stacksitting) is how to sit properly without back support.



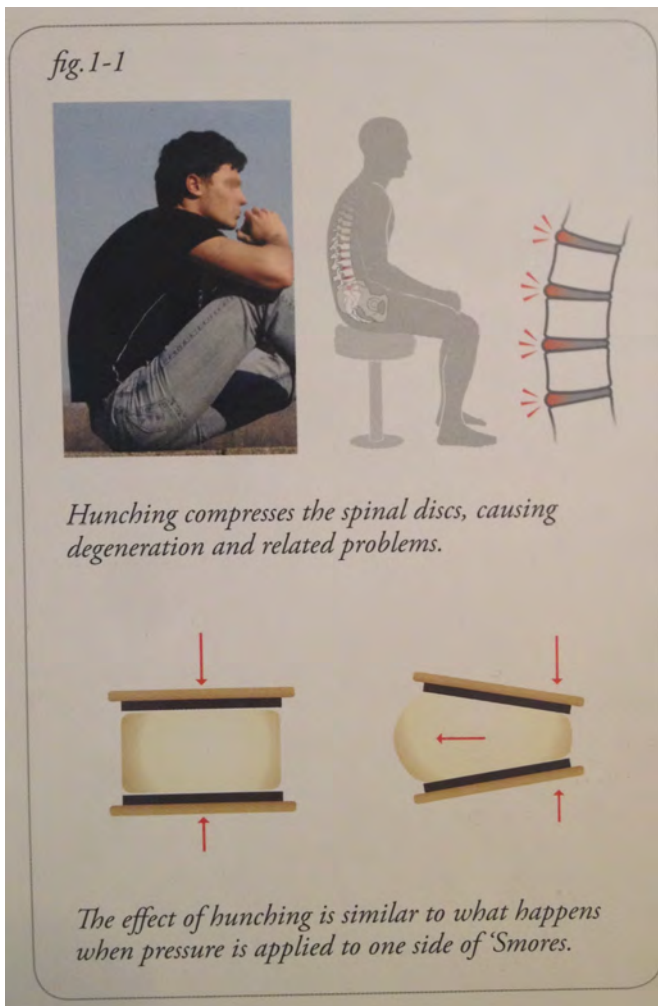
Stretchsitting is basically a way to lengthen your spine against the back of a chair, which will help prevent any further damage and help your body to heal.

A couple of the key things that you will do are A) make sure the lower back curve is present, B) keep the shoulders in their natural position (relaxed back instead of hunched forward), and C) Restore proper head position.

The cool thing is that besides fixing your back pain, stretch sitting also helps fix things like carpal tunnel syndrome or repetitive stress injuries related to the arms (like tendinitis in the elbow, wrist, etc). Improper head and shoulder position literally squeezes the nerves (which all originate in the neck/head), and reduces oxygen flow to the brain. Scary stuff! And the fact is that many of us who sit all day have horrendous neck posture.

This was one of the reasons why I have had such bad chronic neck issues, which (if you remember), originated with chronic back pain that progressed.

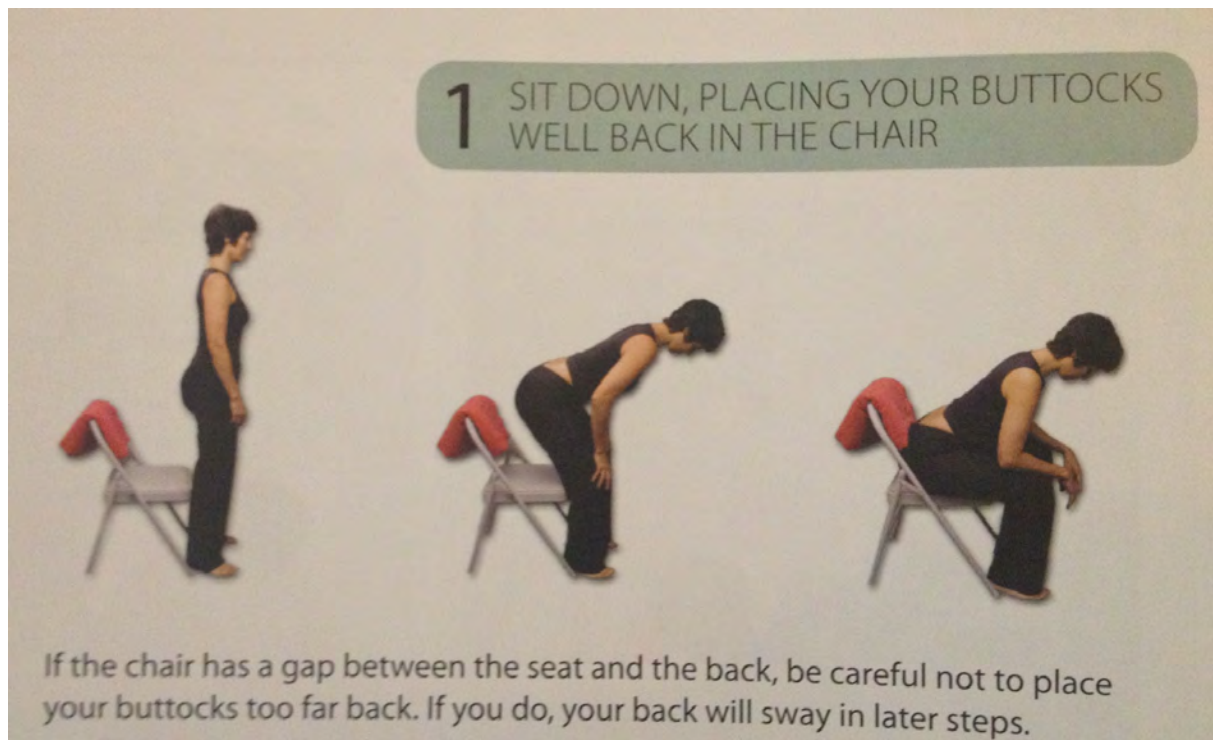
But the main reason for properly aligning the back is that any time the back isn't lined up properly, you are putting pressure on your spinal discs that can lead to herniated discs and spinal degeneration, and looks like this:



I won't even go into detail about how many auxiliary problems are resolved by fixing posture, but if you have chronic pain, this is the place to start.

So let's talk about stretchsitting — in other words, sitting with a lengthened spine in your chair. It feels extremely good, and if you're at work you can practice this all day.

## Step 1: Sit Down, Placing Your Butt Far to the Back of the Chair



It's important here to get your butt into the back of the chair. Many people just sit down, and if you have bad posture to begin with, you're going to round your lower back. It's absolutely crucial that your lower back is *not rounding out*.

## Step 2 & 3 Keep The Feet Shoulder Width Apart and Relax



At this step you can also very *gently* lean slightly forward and upward to try and lengthen the spine and neck a bit.

But it's really important that you keep the lower back curve and keep it planted in the chair, otherwise it might round out and lift up.



## Step 4: Use the Chair to Lengthen Your Spine



The important thing here is to relax your lower body – imagine you are pulling your body in two different directions.

It's like hanging from a pull-up bar: just left the upper and lower body relax and pull away from each other.

Here what you are doing is using both hands and pushing up off the armrest in order to lengthen the spine – and then set it back into the chair in a lengthened position.

You almost want to pretend that a “hook” is catching your spine and keeping it stretched out on the chair.

## Step 5: Attach Your Mid-Back to the Backrest (or a cushion)



So in step 4 you manually stretched out the spine, by pushing off the arm rest and letting the back stretch out – now, you are placing that (now stretched out) back against the back of the chair.

Relax for a second.

You will feel this almost tingly feeling in your back – it's a fantastic feeling of relaxation, circulation and blood flow. That's one of the ways you know you stretched it out well.

## Step 6: Release the Tension in Your Arms



Release the arms, and relax for a second. Feel the chair taking the weight of your back, and feel that spine stretch and tingle as it gets better circulation and relaxes fully.

## Step 7: (How to Tell if You Straightened Properly)



If your lower back feels stretched out a bit — you're doing it right. Note: it may feel weird at first — Just give it time, you will be thanking sweet baby jesus you discovered this technique.

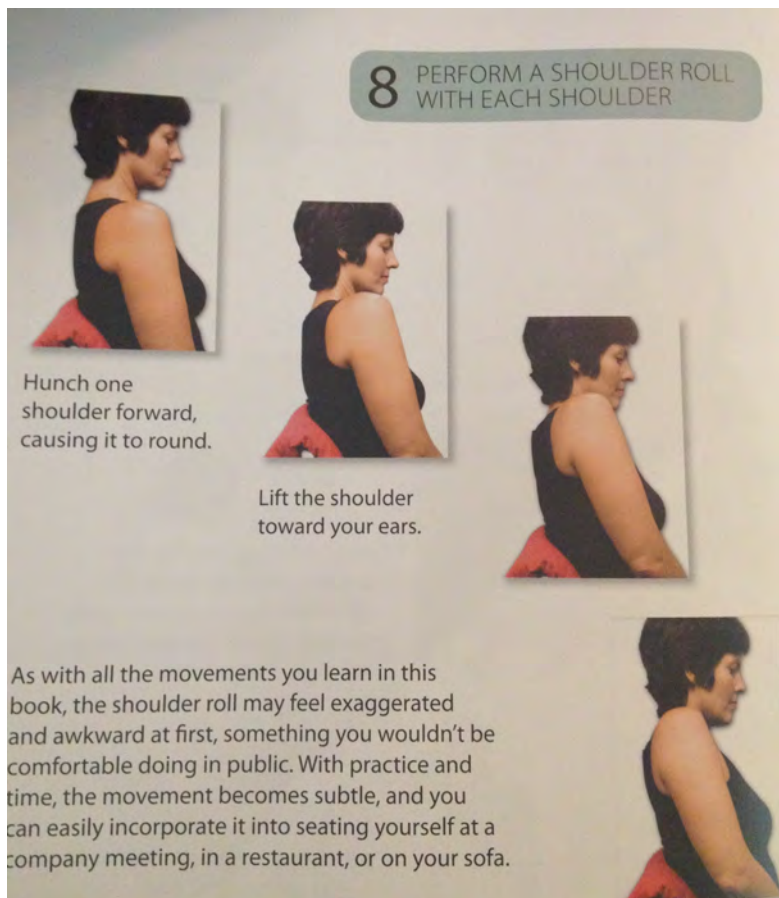
If you aren't sure whether you successfully stretched out your lower back, put your hand on your back just above the point of contact with the chair.

You should feel a roll of skin there that the chair has pushed up. That's what you want — the chair stretching you out a bit, like this (see the skin bunched up?):





## Step 8: Roll Your Shoulders Back

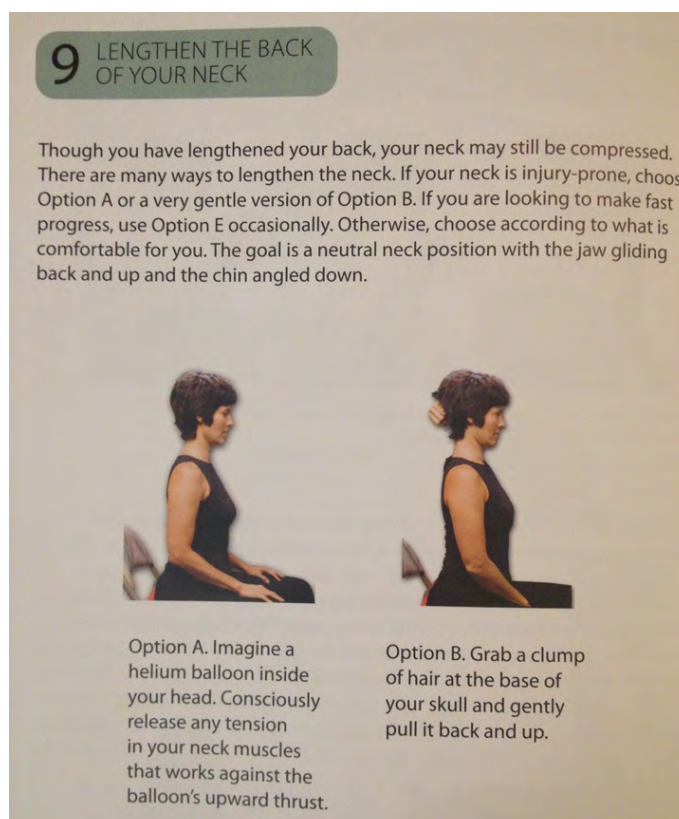


Many of us naturally hunch our shoulders forward and poke our necks out when seated — it's naturally what happens when you slouch your lower back (instead of keeping the lower back arch).

Hunched shoulders and a head that sticks out lead to a whole host of issues: nerve issues throughout the arm, wrist, and hand (carpal tunnel syndrome anyone?), pins and needles in the arms and shoulders while sleeping, as well as potentially headaches due to reduced oxygen flow from the brain ([see this video](#)).

The basic movement is this: take one shoulder and hunch it forward as far as it will go, then slowly lift it towards your ear, and gently guide it backward (don't push it), then let it fall. It should now be noticeably closer to the back than it was before. This will restore good arm circulation and free up anything that is being pinched or otherwise affected by improper alignment. As you can tell, modern humans are a piece of work...

## Step 9: Lengthen The Back of Your Neck (Finished!)



Here's the last step!

Remember what I said are the two biggest things that most people that sit a lot mess up? A. Letting the lower back lose its curve and B. Letting the head stick out.

Both of these lead to big time chronic dysfunctions down the road.

Here's the final step on ensuring that your head position is correct, which is *very important* for those of you who have upper back pain (that burning between the shoulder blades).

Gokhale gives 4 or 5 recommendations for lengthening the neck:

- A. Imagine a helium balloon inside your head — release any tension in your neck, and imagine it pulling your head up into the air.
- B. Grab a clump of your hair at the base of your skull, and gently pull your head *back and up* (see image above)
- C. Grasp the base of your skull with both hands and gently pull upward while lowering your shoulders
- D. Place an object on your head (like a towel — or imagine it), and push up against it

That's it for stretch-sitting!

This is one of the two techniques I use every day when I work. Usually after an hour of sitting the back pain sets in and I have to be really conscious of my posture — that's when I walk through the steps in stretch-sitting (It seems like a lot, but it takes less than a minute when you get good).

Every single time I use this, it works. It's a total godsend.

## F.A.Q / Questions / Common Mistakes & Misc. Awesomeness



“I feel overly stretched”

If you feel overly stretched, gently pull away from the chair a bit and let your back slide down the chair a bit.

“I don’t feel the stretch in my spine”

If you don’t feel the stretch in your spine after you’ve completed all the steps, check for the roll of flesh above the chair (see step 7).

If you *do* have that fold of skin, then you are stretchsitting — sometimes it takes people time to feel it because they are used to being tight throughout the day.

“It’s uncomfortable where my back touches the chair.”

Sometimes I drape a sweater over the back of my chair so it’s a little bit of padding to put my back up against. Either your chair is not very padded, or you’re too skinny. If your case is the latter, you need to lay on the cheeseburgers.

“My chair sucks”

Some of those big office “CEO chairs” have a back much higher than the person sitting in them. It’s virtually impossible to stretchsit in those, so stay tuned for lesson 2 which is stacksitting. 16

## Part 3: How to Sit Without Back Pain - Stacksitting 101

So earlier I introduced two methods for fixing chronic back pain - The Gokhale Method and the Egoscue method.

I use both regularly for fixing chronic back pain. But now that we talked about the origins a little bit, and I gave you one technique (stretchsitting), let me give you another one: Stacksitting.

This technique is called "Stacksitting" - which shows you how to properly sit upright throughout the day without back pain.

First, watch this video:



### Intro - What Perfect Posture Looks Like



What perfect spinal alignment looks like – but few of us in the west have good enough hip flexibility to sit properly with a straight spine on the floor.



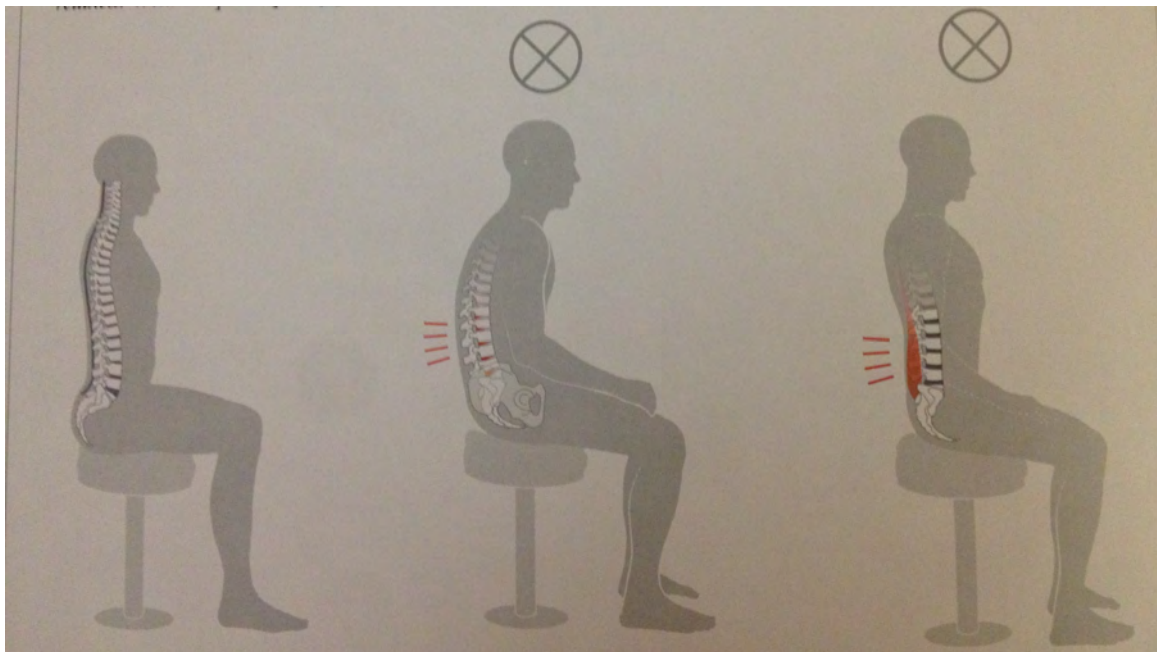
See the baby in that picture? That's what perfect spinal posture looks like. You often still see it in Asian cultures where sitting on the ground is common even as adults so people never lose the flexibility.

For many of us westerners though... yeah, that's a problem.

Not only do we lose the flexibility, we lose the good habits we had as flexible kids. So when we go to sit all day in an office chair it's the same situation — we're reinforcing bad posture leading us down the road to pain.

## Part 1 – How Does Your Back Look Now?

**WARNING:** If you have any suspicion of a herniated disc, DO NOT TRY THIS EXERCISE because tilting the pelvis has the potential to pinch the disc.



Did your mother ever tell you sit up straight at the dinner table? As it turns out, that was pretty bad advice...

The picture on the left is proper posture. The picture in the center is what happens when you slouch. The picture on the right is when your mom says "Sit up straight!" and you tighten up your lower back. You *appear* to be sitting up straight, but in reality you are compromising your posture by putting tension into the lower back. In all likelihood you will still experience back pain.

The key to awesomeness here is instead to get your butt back and *slightly rotate your pelvis forward*. That helps the lower back relax, and will align the spine. Now let's talk about how to do that, because it's often difficult to do for most of us who are used to tucking the pelvis and being hunched over like cavemen all day.





Step 1: Place a Chair Sideways In Front of The Mirror (So you can see your profile)

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Step 2: Sit on the Front of the Chair Away From the Backrest

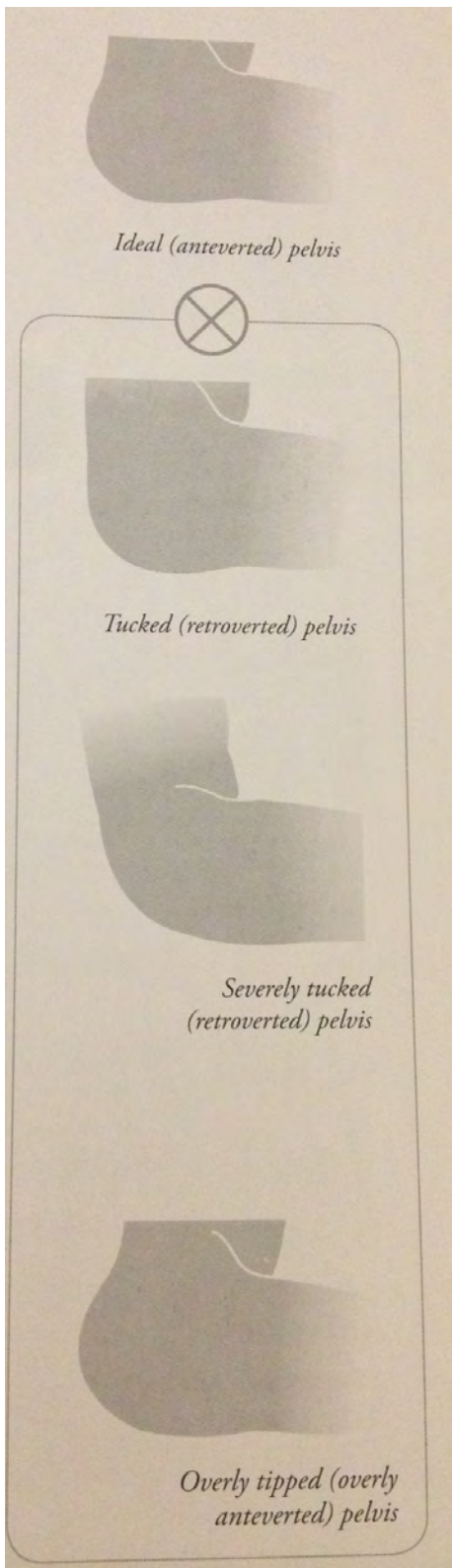
Notes: You want to make sure you are sitting on the edge of the chair. Try to assume your normal seated posture, and look at the following images (in step 3) to see which one it most resembles.

This will be a key indicator and key insight into your posture — if you are unsure, the vast majority of modern “sitters” have a tucked pelvis and a rounded back. The typical computer neanderthal posture.

Step 3: Look in the Mirror to Assess The Position of Your Pelvis (Which Neanderthal Are You?)

Which one of these looks most like your pelvic posture? ==>

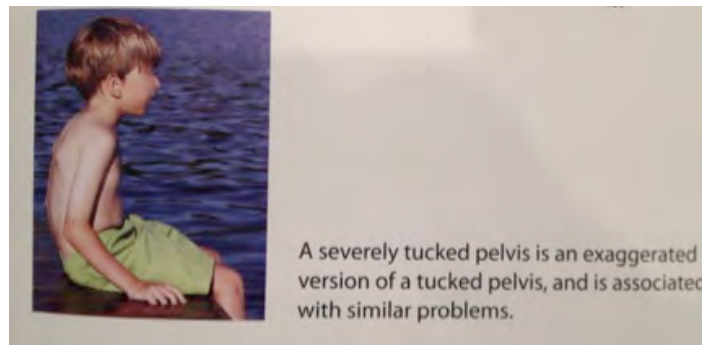
A. The Basket-Carrying African Queen (straight)



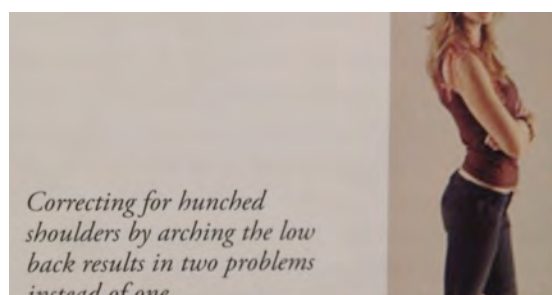
B. The Surgery Tech Who Sits Too Much (rounded)



C. The Nerdy Kid Who Sits Way Too Much (severely tucked pelvis)



D. The Over-Compensating Model Who Thinks She's Sexy But Really is Ruining Her Back



## Step 4: Check The Shape of Your Lower Back

So which one of those 4 most looks like your pelvis alignment?

Is it:

- Straight (ideal)
- Tucked (rounded lower back, usually with head & shoulders forward and lots of neck & shoulder tension)
- Severely tucked

Overly tipped pelvis (overly arched back) — Usually found in people who overcompensate for hunched shoulders, who are told to “Sit up straight!” by mom.

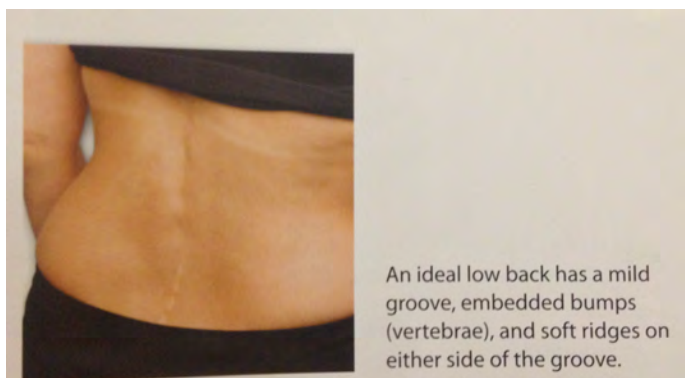
## Step 5: Using Your Fingertips, Check the Spinal Groove in Your Back

Find the middle of your lower back — feel the individual vertebrae of your spine there? Now feel *the muscles* that are on either side of those vertebrae – is the groove deep or shallow?

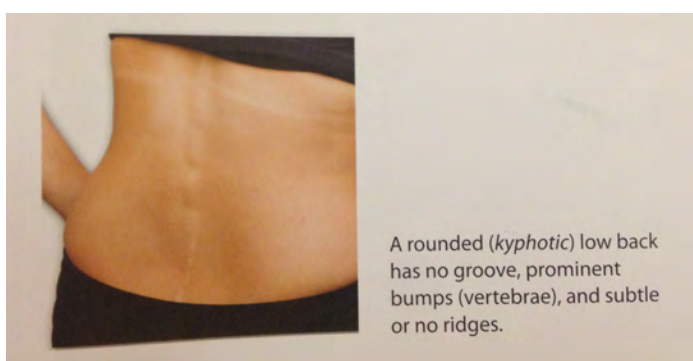
Are the ridges on either side like a tightly drawn bow or are they relaxed?

Compare your spine to one of the three following pictures:

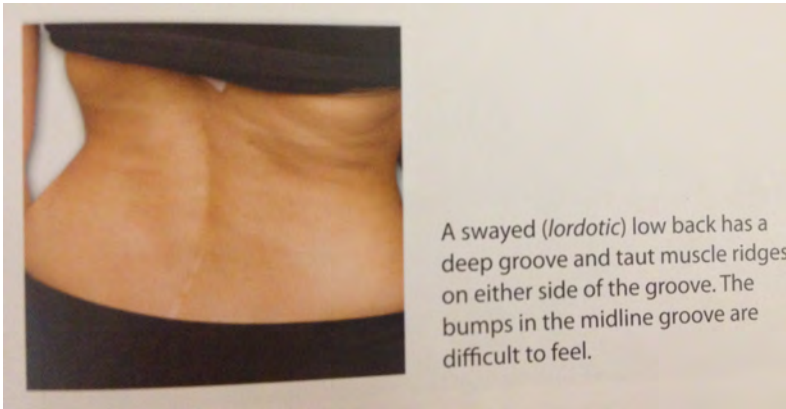
A. An ideal back has: a mild groove, embedded bumps (the vertebrae), and soft ridges on either side of the groove.



B. A rounded lower back has: no groove, prominent vertebrae, and subtle or no ridges



C. A swayed lower back has: a deep groove and taut muscle ridges on either side of the groove (because you're flexing the back muscles). The vertebrae in-between the muscles are difficult to feel and are mostly hidden



Now that you have a few key pieces of information, let's jump into the how-to.

## Part 2: Sitting Without Back Pain



Remember that *this* is the perfect posture we're aiming for! Think about this child's posture compared to your own.

Look at the back positioning. Look at the hip flexibility. Look at the lower back shape. Look at the neck and head alignment. Remember them!



## Step 1: Place A Wedge (or Pillow) On The Chair



A pillow or wedge will do exactly what your old piano teacher told you — sit up straight. The point of the wedge is that it helps keep your pelvis angled forward (which is how it should be) and not backward — which will result in slouching and back / neck pain.

## Step 2: Bend at Your Hips And Then At Your Knees, Lowering Yourself Onto the Front Edge of the Wedge / Pillow



It's important that you don't just sit down on the chair or else you're gonna mess up your pelvic alignment — so to start, you want to exaggerate this entire movement and stick your butt out while sitting down.

Pretend you're trying to sit on the toilet and you should re-create the movement perfectly.

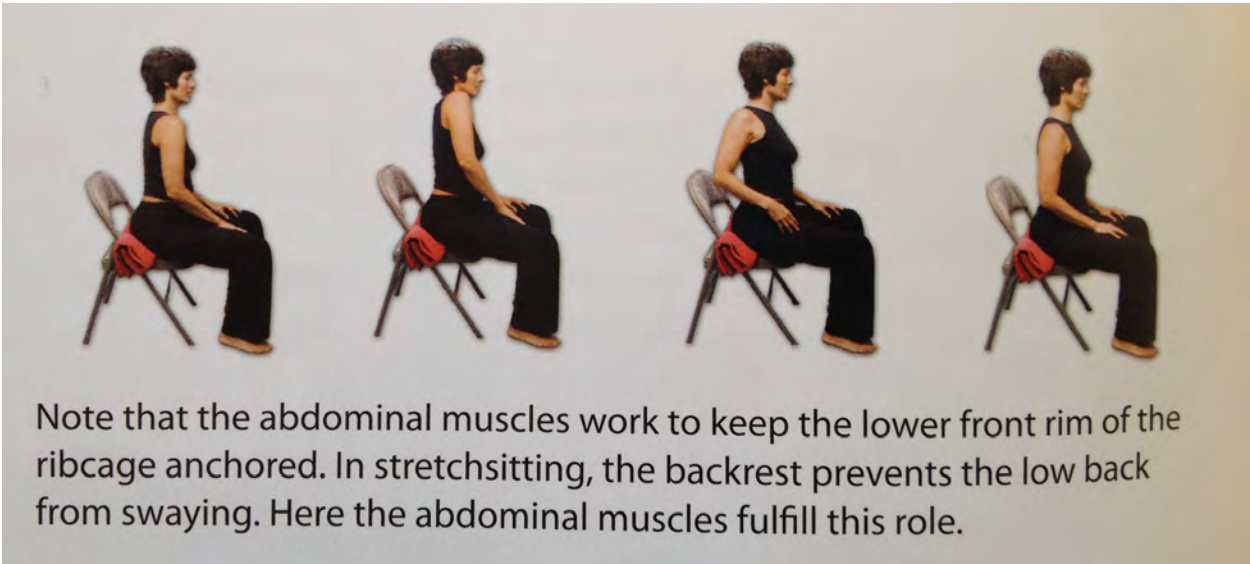


### Step 3: Slightly Clench Your Stomach & Sit up Straight

This part is important. While you're slowly sitting up, gently clench your ab muscles and use them to sit up straight and keep your body straightened out.

Many people will overly arch their lower back and then just sit up straight — this is incorrect and you'll probably end up having a lower back ache after awhile.

### Step 4: Perform a Shoulder Roll



Since you're already sitting up, the last two things are to make sure that your shoulder and neck alignment is okay.

Take one shoulder, and slowly push it forward until it's as far forward as it can go.

Then slowly rotate it up towards your ear — and then all the way down back. Make sure you aren't arching your back to try and compensate.

Do the same with the other shoulder, and once they are rotated back, let them relax in that position.

## Step 5: Lengthen Your Neck

### 9 LENGTHEN THE BACK OF YOUR NECK

Though you have lengthened your back, your neck may still be compressed. There are many ways to lengthen the neck. If your neck is injury-prone, choose Option A or a very gentle version of Option B. If you are looking to make fast progress, use Option E occasionally. Otherwise, choose according to what is comfortable for you. The goal is a neutral neck position with the jaw gliding back and up and the chin angled down.



Option A. Imagine a helium balloon inside your head. Consciously release any tension in your neck muscles that works against the balloon's upward thrust.



Option B. Grab a clump of hair at the base of your skull and gently pull it back and up.

Gokhale gives a couple recommendations for tips to lengthen the neck:

- A. Imagine a helium balloon inside your head — release any tension in your neck, and imagine it pulling your head up into the air.
- B. Grab a clump of your hair at the base of your skull, and gently pull your head *back and up* (see image above)
- C. Grasp the base of your skull with both hands and gently pull upward while lowering your shoulders
- D. Place an object on your head (like a towel — or imagine it), and push up against it

## Problems / Troubleshooting

“I’m slumped over still”

If you still feel like your shoulders are hunched over, you didn’t tip your pelvis far enough forward. Briefly sit forward again, and try getting your butt a bit higher up on the pillow or wedge. Then slightly clench your abs as you sit up so you maintain a straight spine.

You can also literally even pull your butt cheeks out, farther up on the cushion.

“My lower back is really arched and is starting to hurt”

You overtipped your pelvis, you probably now have an overly arched lower back. You can fix that by sitting forward a bit to the left, then slightly pulling the right butt cheek forward. And then doing the same with the left side.

That's it for Stacksitting! Practice that while at work, when you're sitting in a chair without a back (or a back that doesn't keep your spine upright).

Next in the series we'll cover 4 things you can do right now, [***that actually work] and will produce immediate back pain relief.***

# 4 Techniques You Can do Right Now For Lower Back Pain Relief

## #1 Egoscue Method

I can not even begin to describe my excitement upon finding the Egoscue method. The underlying premise is simple: you're experiencing pain because of chronic inactivity which weakens certain muscles and tightens others, and the promise is true: it works. Famous celebrities and pro athletes have raved about it, and if you don't believe me, just [look at the Amazon reviews](#).

I'll go into much much more detail later, but for now, here are the exercises you should be doing (and the instructions):

For Lower Back Pain

A. Static back – Duration: 5-10 minutes



How to do it:

- Lie on your back with both legs bent at right angles on a chair or block
- You can just rest your hands on your stomach or lay your arms out at the side below shoulder level, palms facing up
- Breathe from your stomach. Let the lower back relax.
- Hold for 5-10 minutes



**B. Static Extension – Duration: 1 Minute**



**Static Extension on the Floor**



For many of us, back pain is caused by the rounding of the back (flexion) from bad postural habits and sitting or slouching. This exercise reminds the back how to extend properly.

How to do it:

- Kneel with hands on the floor positioned under your shoulders
- Let your back and head relax towards the floor
- Let your shoulder blades come together, and make sure there is an arch in your back
- Keep the elbows straight but shift your hips forward 6 to 8 inches so they are not aligned with the knees.
- Hold 1-2 minutes

C. Supine Groin Stretch – Duration: 10 minutes per side



How to do it:

- Lie on your back with one leg resting on a chair, knee bent at 90 degrees, while the other leg is extended straight out and resting on the floor
- Make sure both legs are aligned with the hips and shoulders
- The foot of the extended leg should be propped upright to preventing it from rolling to one side
- Hold 10 minutes then do it on the other side



#### **D. Modified Floor Block – Duration: 6 Minutes**



#### How to do it:

- Lie on your stomach with your forehead on the floor — your feet should be pigeon toed
- Rest your elbows on books or blocks so that your hands are in the “don’t shoot!” position
- Make sure your shoulders are level — breathe deeply and relax the upper body
- Let your bodyweight naturally fall into the floor
- Hold 6 minutes

The Egoscue method is one thing I’ve constantly revisited because it works so well. Pro athletes and many celebrities have used it to eliminate lifelong, chronic pain (even after decades).

## #2 Trigger points

The science behind trigger points suggests that many chronic pains in the body are due to tension in the musculature. Trigger points are essentially the “origin” points of these pains, and the way to stimulate the relaxation of these points is deep (slightly painful) massage to relax the area.

The interesting thing about trigger points is that even though you think your pain may be coming from a certain area (e.g. your lower back or knee), very rarely is that the case. Usually somewhere in the surrounding musculature there is something going wrong, rather than at the site of the pain. This is called referral pain and is important to remember. The place hurting is often just collateral damage.

Generally you stimulate the points 5-7 times during the day, for about 30 seconds – 1 minute at a time. Many people report complete back pain relief after regularly using trigger points throughout the day.

Trigger points are a little tricky though because they take some practice to find.

How to stimulate the points:

- When you find the point, it should be very tender and painful. Apply pressure using your thumb, knuckle, or tennis ball on a 7 (out of 1 to 10) pain scale.
- Apply firm pressure in sliding strokes, like you’re trying to iron the area. *Don’t* just apply pressure and hold it still. Only massage in one direction.
- Do 6 – 12 strokes per trigger point each session (don’t overdo it). Repeat 6-12x a day.
- If you aren’t getting relief you aren’t stimulating the right points

Here are the points you are going to stimulate:

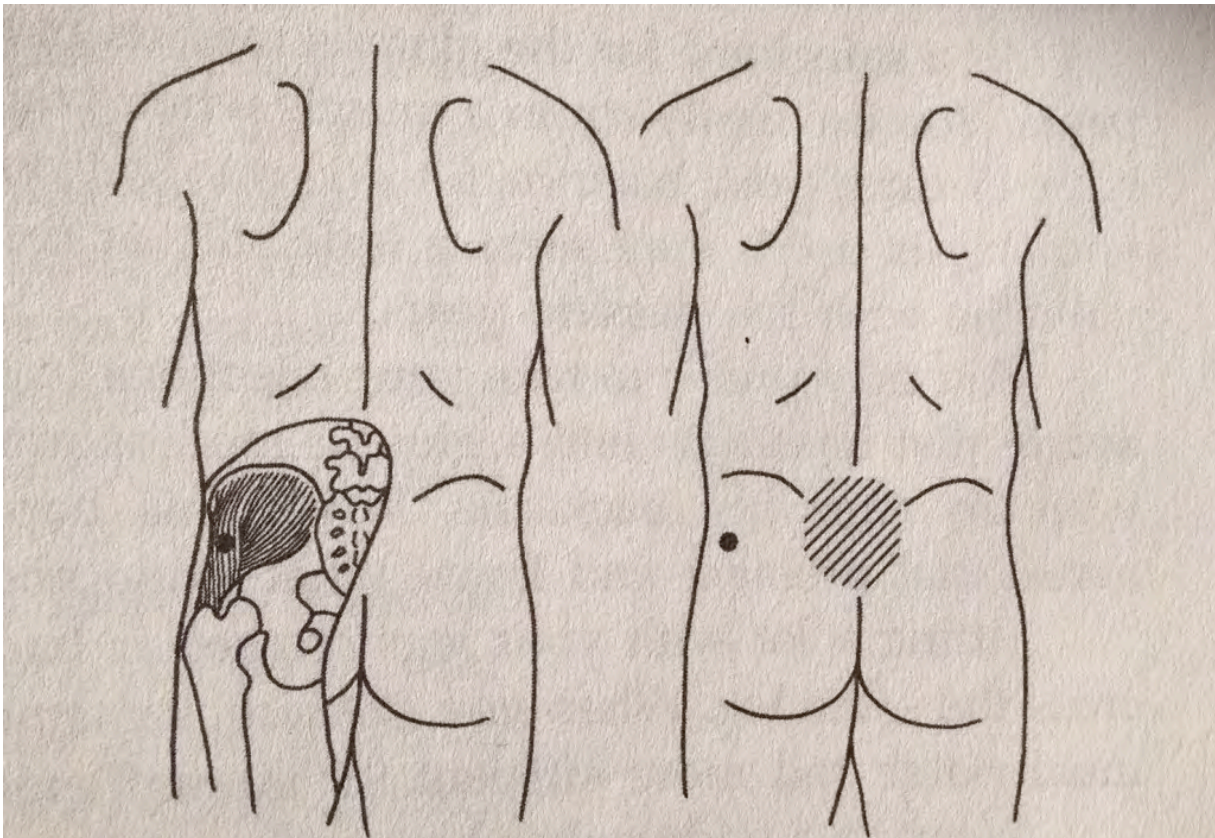
1. Gluteus medius (middle-top of your butt)
2. Deep Spinal Muscles (muscles running alongside the left of your spine) (Use a tennis ball)
3. Quadratus lumborum (muscles coming from left to right around your back, under the rib cage) (Use a tennis ball too)



(Click the image to watch the How-to video first)

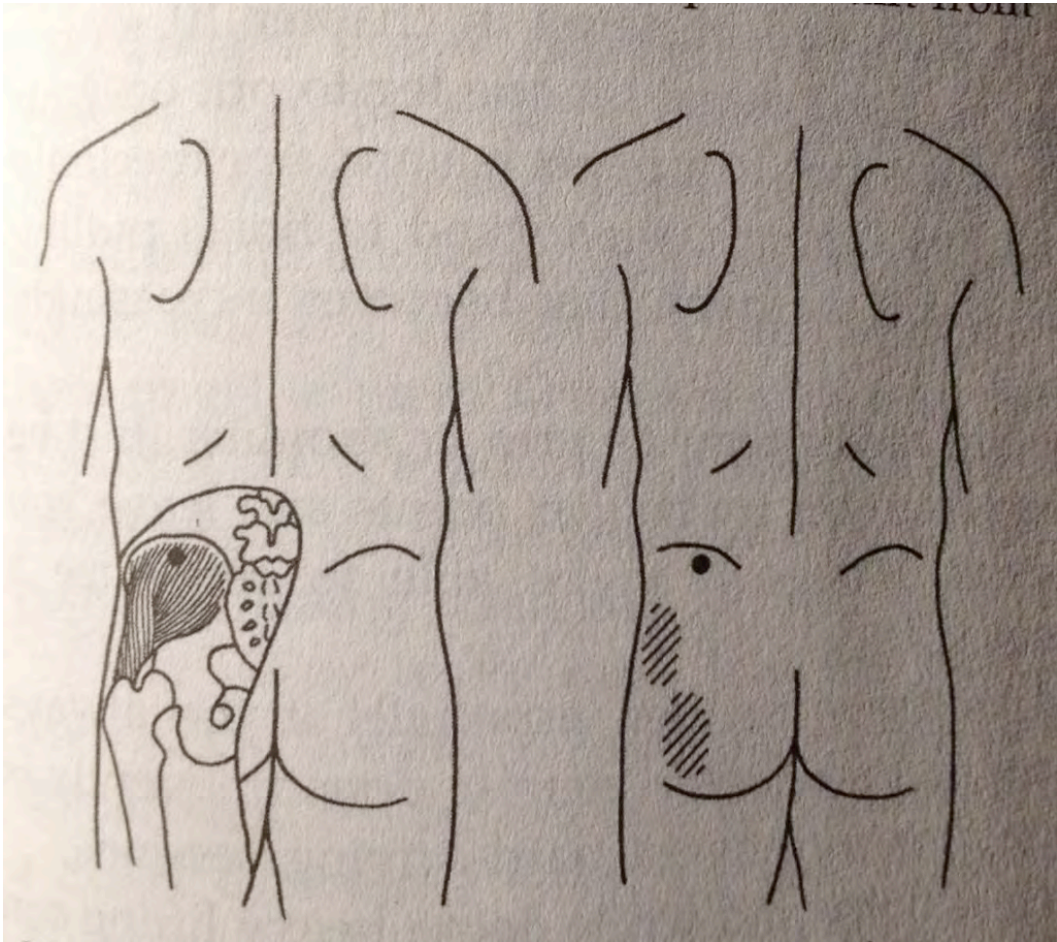


**Point A**

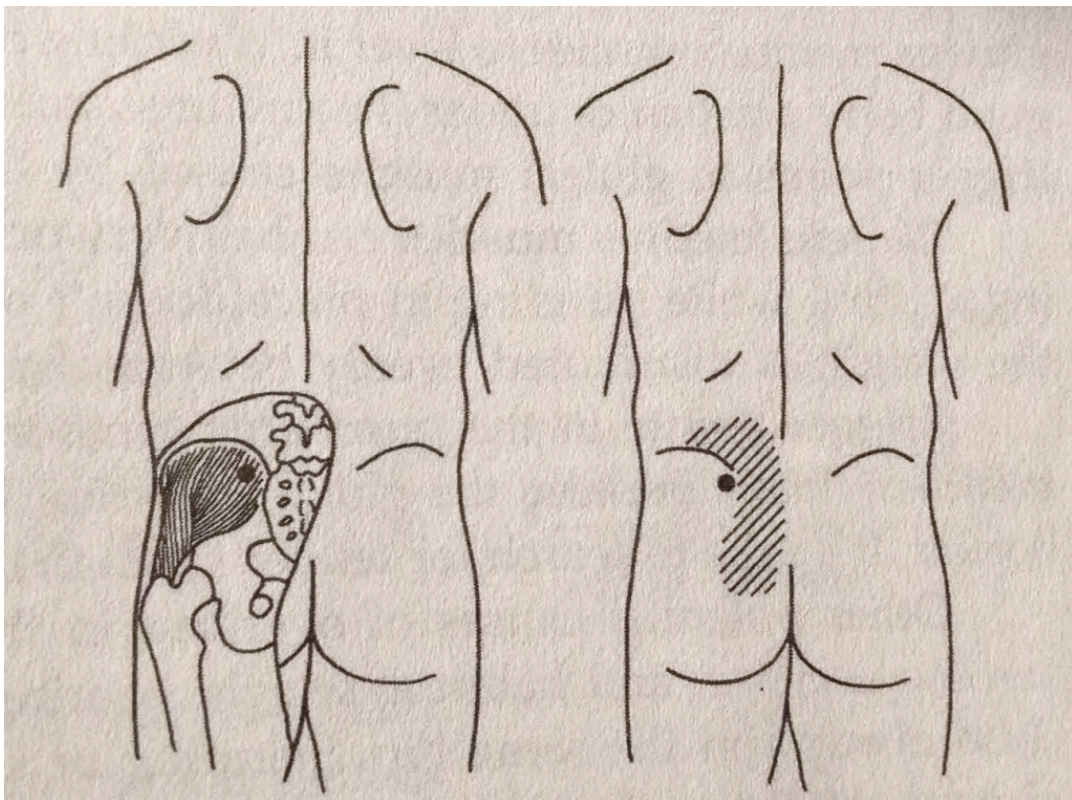


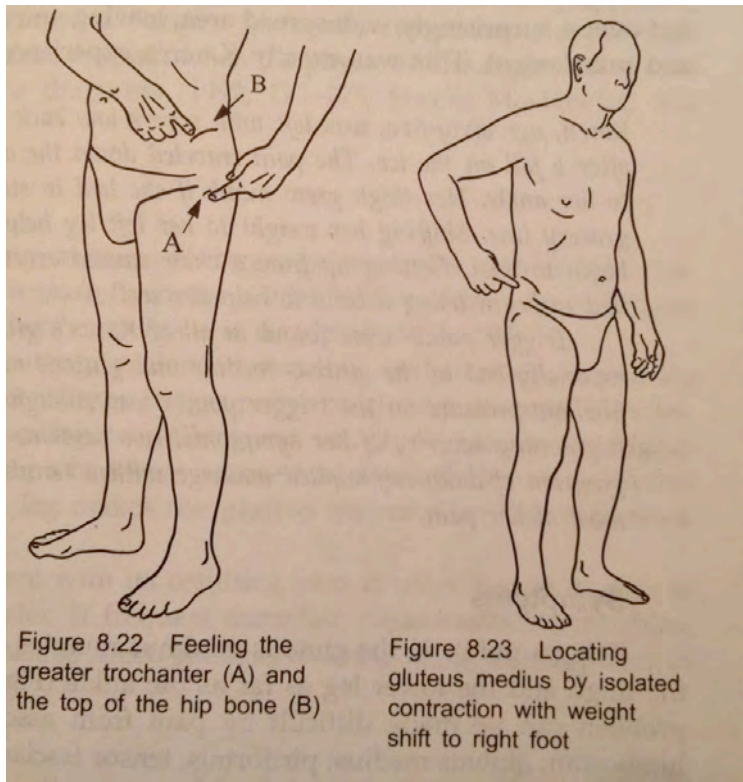


**Point B**



**Point C**





Stimulating the gluteus medius points with fingers (points B & C)

How to find the gluteus medius points:

- Find the top of your hip bone (on your side) and put your hand on the muscle just below it, in other words, put your hand on the side of your hip.
- To locate the gluteus medius, shift your weight to one foot while you feel for a contraction just below the top of the hip bone. You should feel the muscle contract there which is basically the side of your butt (this is your gluteus medius)
- Follow this meaty part of your butt around to the back — remember it's just under your hip bone
- Apply hard pressure with your thumbs and poke around until you find a super tender, painful spot. Then follow the instructions above for stimulating the trigger points

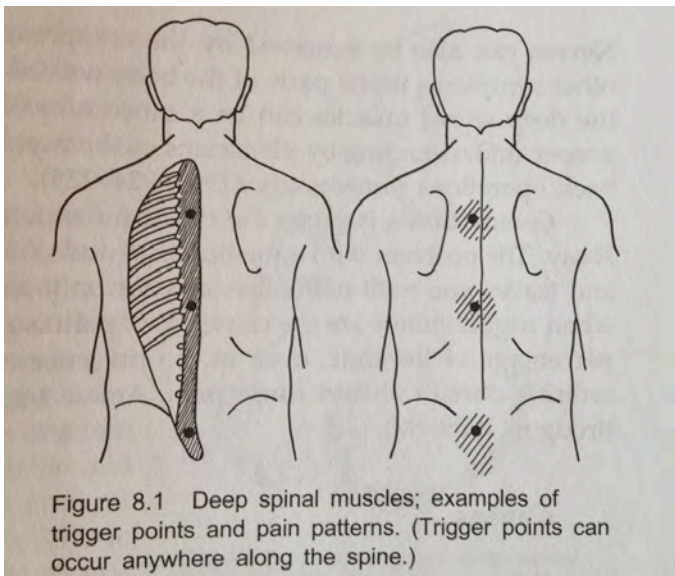




Using a tennis ball on the gluteus medius spot:

- You can also use a tennis ball and rub against the wall or lay on the floor, to stimulate the gluteus medius spot and apply firmer pressure and give the hands a break
- The gluteus medius point is usually around belt level, but it obviously depends how high or low you wear your pants. Just look for the soft fleshy top part of your butt (under the hip bone) and start applying hard pressure — you'll find a tender spot.

## B. Deep Spinal Muscles

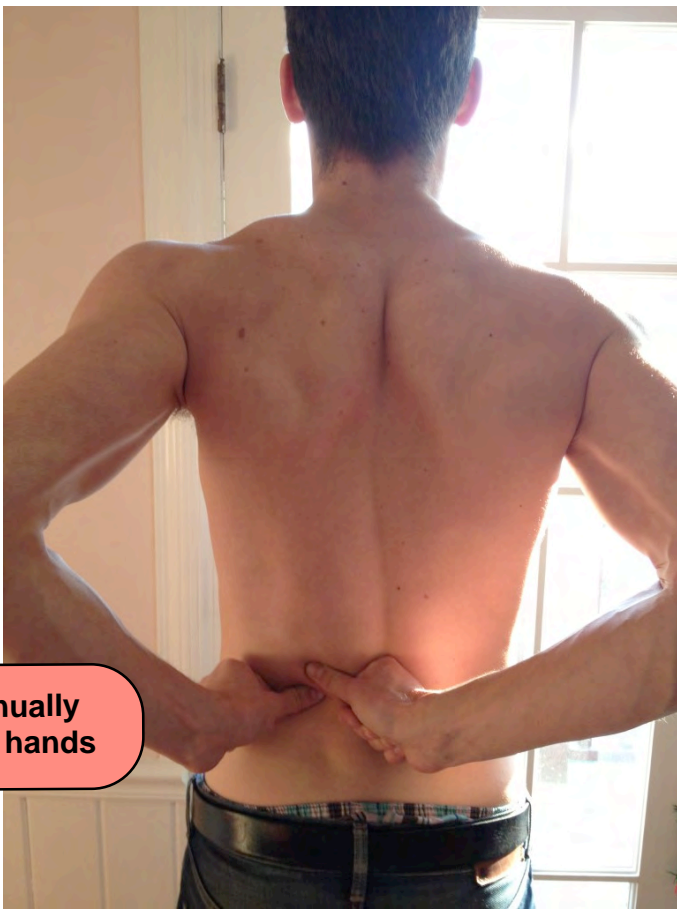
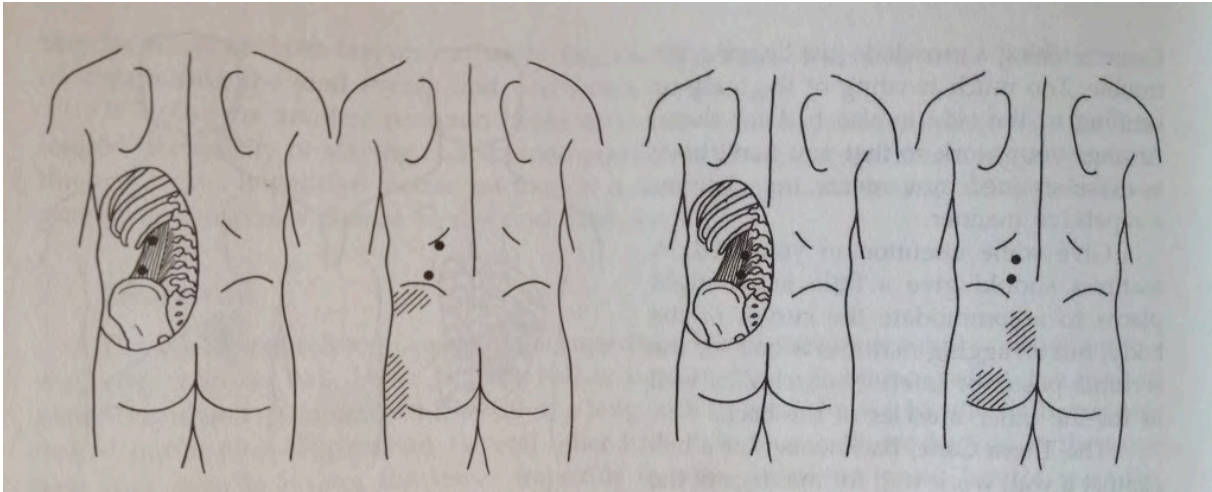


How to find/stimulate them:

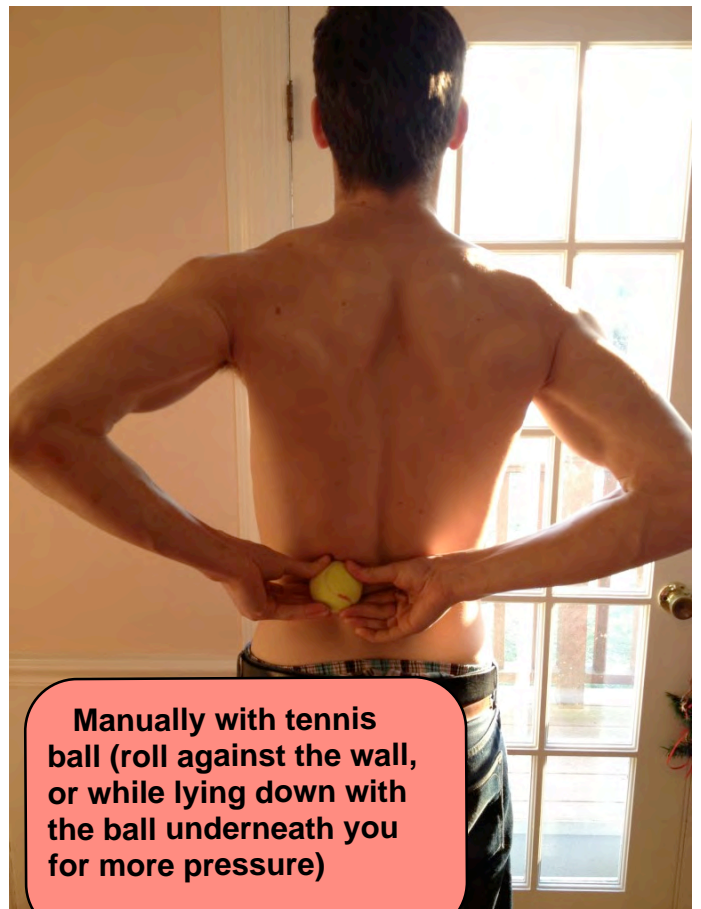
- The deep spinal muscles are basically all the muscles running alongside the side of the spine. They are easy to find and stimulate.
- Grab a tennis ball and put your back up against the wall. Put the ball so it's placed just to the left of your spine, where there is a meaty muscular portion.
- Rub your back up and down the wall applying hard pressure with the tennis ball. Remember, it should hurt
- Make sure that you're not applying pressure on the spine itself



### C. Quadratus lumborum



**Manually  
with hands**



**Manually with tennis  
ball (roll against the wall,  
or while lying down with  
the ball underneath you  
for more pressure)**

Here's how you find/stimulate it:

- The quadratus lumborum is pretty much where you think about your kidneys being.
- It's located right under your ribcage (between the rib cage and hip bone — see above) , and has a portion in the front of your body and back.
- To stimulate these points, either use your thumbs like above, or use a tennis ball *and roll horizontally — from the back of your body to the front, left and right. Not up and down.*
- Basically place the tennis ball right under your rib cage on your back, and then apply pressure from left to right, horizontally.

### #3 Self Myofascial Release

Myofascial release is basically personal deep tissue massage. Most often a person will use a foam roller because it's an easy way to apply lots of pressure to an area and gently roll out areas with high amounts of tension.

Myo-fascial release falls into the category of deep-tissue massage or even trigger point therapy, meaning that the person will roll until they find a tender area, and then massage the area for 30 – 60 seconds before moving on.

Research has shown that massage and the use of pressure points (in combination with joint manipulation, exercise, and relaxation therapy) is [effective for both acute and chronic lower back pain](#).

But then again you probably didn't really need to hear that — we all know how good it feels to lay down and have someone walk on our back when it's killing!

If your back is killing you, there are four places you should sit down and give yourself some myo-fascial release. You can either use a foam roller at your gym, [buy one on Amazon](#), or use a tennis ball or even a baseball bat with a pillow over



3 Places to Use Myo-fascial release – Time Required: 6 Minutes

#### A. Hip Flexors & Quads

Many people are told to stretch their hamstrings if their back is hurting, claiming that the hamstrings are what's tight. In reality, it's often the hip flexors that are the underlying cause — once you stretch the hip flexors they will release the tension on the hamstrings.

The reason for stretching these areas is that when they're tight, they alter the curvature in your lower back (which is crucial to keeping the weight evenly on your spine). Tight hamstrings or hip flexors will pull your pelvis out of proper alignment.

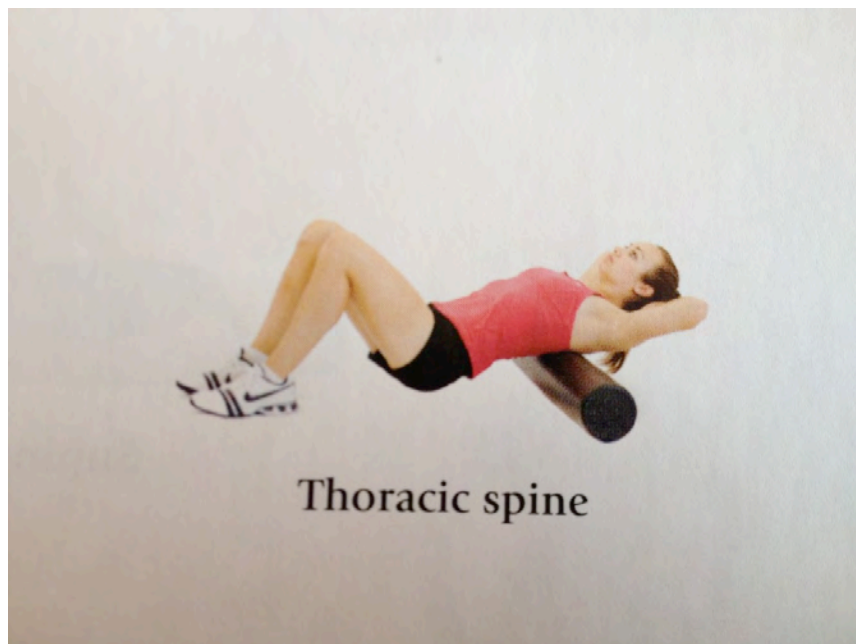
#### How to do it

- Get yourself in the position in the image above, and then slowly roll forward up to your waist until you find a tender point.
- Once you find a tender point, leave the foam roller there for 30 seconds, or very very slowly roll back and forth for the same duration
- Make sure to roll both near your groin (up where the top of your leg meets your hips — the hip flexors), as well as the length of the leg to stretch out the quads
- Duration: 30-60 seconds. 2 sets.



Thighs and hip flexors

## B. Lower back / Thoracic Back



How to do it:

- Lay down with the foam roller in the middle of your back and then gradually roll it down to your butt, and up to your neck
- Focus on the area closer to the butt — where the gluteus medius trigger points are, the top meat of your butt
- Pause at tender areas for 30 – 60 seconds, or roll them very very slowly
- Duration 30-60 seconds. 2 sets.

## C. Hip Adductors

Stretching the hip adductors will help relax the muscles that are attached to the hips, which will remove some of the strain on the lower back when sitting/walking/doing athletics, and will help restore the natural curvature.

How to do it:



- Pull your leg out at a 90 degree angle, and roll along the inside of the leg. You are relaxing the adductor muscles which pull the legs together — they are often tight and keep the hips tight because we keep our legs together all day in a seated position.
- Roll along the length of the inner leg, and if you find a tender spot either pause, or roll very firmly but slowly.
- Duration – 30-60 seconds. 2 Sets



## #4 Static Stretches

Static stretches, like those done in Yoga, can be a fantastic way to alleviate lower back pain for two reasons: #1 you're relaxing areas that are constantly experiencing tension and getting more blood flow to them, and #2 you're lengthening areas that grow stiff and shortened from lack of daily use.

For those of you that sit 40 hours a week, doing these regularly will help immensely. Many of us slump our lower back throughout the day which puts improper pressure on the lower back. There should always be a curve in the lower back, and [putting a pillow or lumbar support will reduce back pain and even referred pain in your legs or surrounding areas.](#)

### A. Hip Flexor Stretch



Pretty self explanatory, we all did it in gym class.

The only difference here is that you should be *focusing* on the feeling of your hip flexors stretching — and not much else. Your hip flexor is the vert top part of your leg right where it connects to your hip.

How to do this properly:

- Keep your back straight
- Focus on pushing the back leg up — you'll feel a harder stretch in your hip flexors
- Flex your butt and clench your abs
- To make this more difficult and more of a stretch, you can lean your upper body away from the back leg. So if it's your left leg that is elongated at the back, face your body right.
- Duration: 30 seconds, 2 repetitions



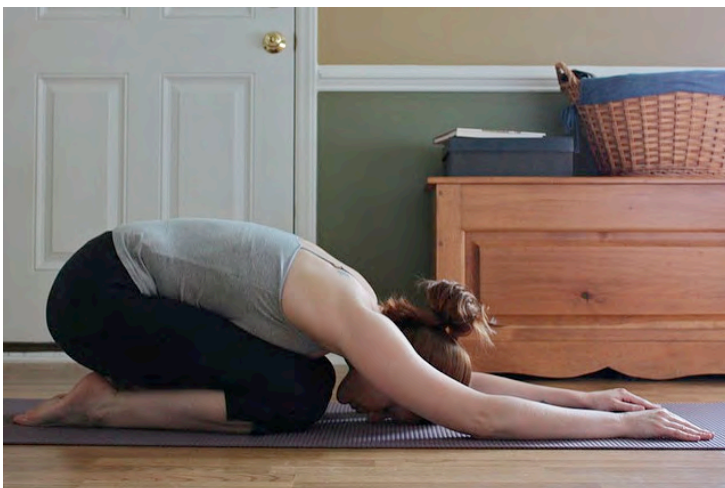
## B. Runner's Quad Stretch



How to do this properly:

- Keep your back straight
- Clench your butt muscles *hard*
- Focus on the feeling of the top part of your leg stretching (the hip flexor). You'll also feel it all the way down near your knee if your quads are really tight
- This will help restore the natural curve in the lower back because tight quads and hip flexors pull the pelvis out of alignment
- Duration: 30 seconds, 2 sets each side

## C. Child's Pose



Do it because: It will help stretch out the upper and mid back, as well as open up the hips a bit. It also feels relaxing as hell.

Duration: 30 seconds, 2 repetitions.

## D. Pigeon Pose



Do it because: It will stretch out those tight hips and your hamstrings. To make it easier, keep your foot more vertical (facing down). To make it harder and feel a deeper hip stretch, try pulling your foot out higher and more horizontal.

Duration: 30 seconds, 2 repetitions.

## E. Downward dog



Do it because: It's an insanely good hamstring and calf stretch, it stretches the upper and middle back, and is a great way to take the load off your spine when you've been sitting all day. Feels amazing when your back is killing.

To get more from the stretch, focus on pushing your upper back down so you feel a nice stretch between your shoulder blades. Try arching your back too for a better back and hamstring stretch.

**That's it, guys! Good luck, and feel free to shoot me an email anytime you have a question --**

**[Alexander@modernhealthmonk.com](mailto:Alexander@modernhealthmonk.com)**

**-- Alex**



## **MODERN HEALTH MONK**

Modern Health Monk is *the* home for people who want to learn the psychology and lifestyle behind reversing chronic pain and health issues.

If you have any question feel free to shoot me an email at [Alexander@modernhealthmonk.com](mailto:Alexander@modernhealthmonk.com)

I am particularly interested in hearing your story and what problems you're currently dealing with.

Cheers !

-- Alex