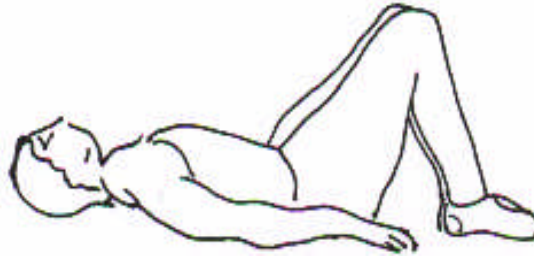




Advice Sheet AS9: Exercises for the lower back

NB: These may be done just before going to bed, to relieve tension in the back before sleep, or first thing in the morning before getting out of bed. They should be done slowly, using discomfort as a guide of how far to stretch.

The starting position for all the following exercises is lying on your back with the knees bent up. ⇒ ⇒ ⇒



1. Slide the hands in the gap between the bed and the natural curve in the lower back. Push your back down onto the hands, so that the
2. Take hold of one knee and draw it slowly up to the chest. Hold for a few seconds and then release the leg. Repeat with each leg several times.
3. Take hold of both knees and draw them up to the chest so that a stretch is felt across the low back up to a point of slight discomfort. Hold for a few seconds and then ease off that point still holding around the knees. Draw the knees up to the point of slight discomfort again and hold. Repeat several times until the knees can be drawn up to the chest more easily with less discomfort in the low back. When returning to the starting position, let each leg down in turn.
4. From the starting position, keeping both knees and feet together, slowly sway the knees side to side. Start with a small range of movement and then increase it until the thighs touch down on the bed on one side and then the other. An extra stretch will be felt in the back if you stretch the arms out in the opposite direction to where the knees are going.