

# 3 Tips To Improve the Health of Your Back at Home



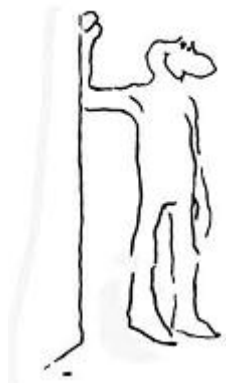
Jaime Saverese  
September 2010

Back discomfort is almost always caused by a muscular imbalance that can be corrected by stretching and strengthening and lengthening your spine. Put down the bottle of Tylenol and try these ache-relieving tips.

## 1. Don't skimp out on the stretching.

If upper back tension is your complaint, try stretching your pec muscles. Many times discomfort in your upper back is caused by postural shortening of pec muscles, leaving your body on its own to correct itself by manually knotting up the muscles that bring your shoulders back. Stretching out your pecs regularly puts slack on the back muscles, relieving tension. For this stretch, place your right elbow at 90 degrees from your body in a doorway on a wall, take a step forward with your right foot for leverage, and push your body weight past your arm while slightly twisting to the left. Hold this stretch for at least 1 minute, then repeat on the opposite side.

If low back pain is your complaint, you may have a tight QL and/or psoas. Shortening of your psoas will give you an increased curve in your lower back, which in turn will shorten your QL muscles. To stop the vicious cycle, try a slow low back bend to stretch your QL, followed by a low lunge to stretch your psoas.



## 2. A little exercise won't kill you.

With a few exercises, you can reverse the postural imbalance that gave you the tension in the first place.

Combined with a pec stretch, strengthening the muscles between your shoulder blades will help you stay in balance. Using 1-10lb dumbbells, stand with legs shoulder-width apart and bend slightly at the knees and at the waist. With arms raised out to the side, squeeze shoulder blades together. Start at 3 sets of 12 and increase weight as needed.

Core strengthen exercises will help alleviate muscle aches by supporting the low back, as well as training the hips, low back and abdomen to work in harmony. Crunches are a great core exercise, just be

careful not to strain your neck. Also, to include a lower abdominal workout, raise your feet 90 degrees while doing crunches.



### **3. Get inverted.**

Get an inversion table, that is. Your spine by far is the part of your body most affected by gravity. An inversion table reduces stress on the back by relieving the pressure on the vertebral discs, and is helpful if your complaint is due to a disc herniation, degenerative disc disease, disc compressions or arthritis. For most people, just a 15 degree inversion is enough to provide therapeutic traction to the spine.



These 3 simple tips should be completed at least once per day. Following these steps will help keep your spine healthy, pain free and feeling great.

**© 2010 D.R.E.A.M. Wellness -- All Rights Reserved.**

*Jaime Savarese is a Licensed Massage Therapist with DREAM Wellness and is widely considered the foremost expert in Massage Therapy in Suffolk County, New York. If you'd like more tips feel free to visit Jaime at [www.livethedreameveryday.com](http://www.livethedreameveryday.com) and be sure to join our mailing list.*