

Yoga for Lower Back Pain

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The Facts

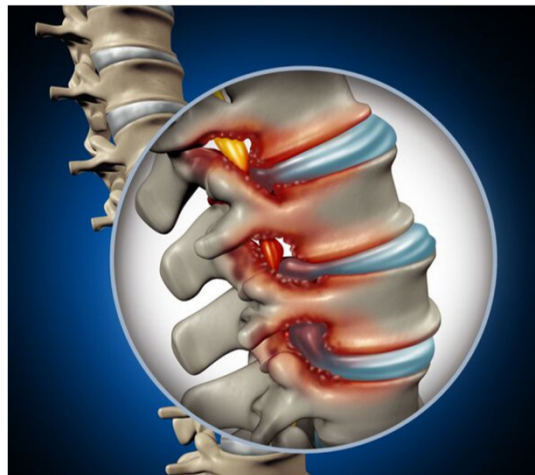
25% of Americans report lower back pain lasting longer than a day or more. The spine contains 24 vertebra making up 5 parts of the spine. Thick discs between to protect the vertebra acting as shock absorbers. There are nerves traveling around the spine, the spinal cord, and muscles around all. Yoga can effectively increase flexibility and strength in muscles. Yoga has been shown to compliment traditional medical care of chronic back pain.

Schatz, M. (1992). Back Care Basics. Shambhala Publications, Boulder, CO.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4878447/pdf/nihms782460.pdf>

Yoga Postures to Relieve Lower Back Pain

- Lay flat to the floor, draw knees into chest- keep back flat to the floor, add blanket under hips if needed. Draw circles on the ceiling with kneecaps.
- Cat/ cow (if disc herniation/slippage has occurred do cat with extreme caution)
- Mountain Pose with small backbend- hands on tops of hips, extend the spine look towards the corner of the wall and ceiling
- Down Dog using wall- stretch hamstrings
- Warrior One
- Dancer using wall
- Cobra
- Bridge- supported
- Spinal twist
- Legs up the wall (blanket under hips)



Purpose for Yoga Therapy for chronic back pain:

Strengthen abdominals, leg muscles and buttocks muscles, increase flexibility of spine and hips, align hips, spine, legs and feet, gain awareness of body, discomfort and pain.

R.A.I.N. technique for chronic pain]

Recognize the pain. don't push it away, just be with it

Acknowledge the pain. *"I feel you back"* honor it, don't try to attach a story to it, just be with it

Investigate it. Use your wisdom body, ask: "When did I first begin to feel discomfort?" "Have I felt this before, and if so when?" Be curious, not critical. Investigate with interest. Try not to catastrophize. Just be with the discomfort.

Non-attachment. Begin to acknowledge the pain without the thought of you having to be with pain for the rest of your life. Once we become unattached to the discomfort we can then begin to breath, recognize that our body is tired and needs rest and tomorrow will be a new day.