

TOOLBOX TALK #3

EXERCISES TO HELP YOUR BACK

Ever wonder what you could do to help strengthen your “lifting” muscles? All of us have gone through formal back injury prevention training of one sort or another. After all, we work in construction. But since we know that using our back extensively comes with the territory, what kind of exercises could you do to make your back withstand a bit more than a normal person?

The following lists seven different exercises that are “back-friendly”:

1. **Wall Slides:** Stand with your back against the wall and your feet shoulder-width apart. Slide down until your knees are bent at about a 90 degree angle. Count to 5 and slide back up. Do this five times.
2. **Leg Raises / Back Muscles:** Lie on your stomach. Keeping your legs straight, lift one leg off the floor. Hold for a count of 10 and lower the leg to the floor. Repeat this with the other leg. Do this five times with each leg.
3. **Leg Raises / Stomach Muscles:** Lie on your back with your arms at your sides. Lift one leg off the floor, keeping it straight, if possible. Hold for a count of 10 and lower it back to the floor. Repeat this with the other leg. Do this five times with each leg.
4. **Partial Sit-up:** Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet on the floor. Slowly raise your head and shoulders off the floor, stretching your arms towards your knees. Count to 10 and then lower your head and shoulders to the floor. Do this five times.
5. **Back Leg Swing:** Stand behind a chair and place your hands on the chair back. Lift one leg backward and off the floor. Keep the leg straight. Lower it slowly. Repeat this with the other leg. Do this five times with each leg.
6. **Curl:** Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Draw your knees up. Grab your legs behind your knees and gently pull towards your chest. Keep your head flat on the floor. Lower your legs to the floor, keeping them bent. Do this five times.
7. **Arch:** Stand with your feet slightly apart. Place your hands on your lower back and bend backwards at the waist. Keep your knees straight. Hold for one to two seconds. Do this as often as desired.

