

Back Care Basics

Several principles of proper back care are detailed on the following pages. The main principles which will be addressed are the following:

1. **Maintain the normal curves of the back.**
2. **Plan your movements ahead of time.**
3. **Ask for assistance when appropriate.**
4. **Do not remain in one position for extended periods of time.**
5. **Maintain a wide, stable base while standing and lifting.**
6. **Pivot your feet, don't twist your back.**
7. **Keep your stomach muscles firm while lifting and participating in daily activities.**
8. **Keep items close to the body when lifting or carrying.**
9. **Lift with your legs, not with your back.**
10. **When in doubt — ask your therapist or doctor.**

If you understand the above principles and implement them into your daily activities, you will decrease the stress on your back and speed the healing process.

This manual will help you understand the types of movements which can continue to irritate your condition and show you alternate ways to perform many activities of daily living without increasing your pain or making your problem worse.

One of the keys to having a healthy back is maintaining the curves of the spine in a **balanced position**. If one of the curves becomes either flattened or excessive (too much curve), the balance and mobility of the spine may be altered and undue stress is placed on the back.

Movements and positions in this manual are identified as those which increase the stress on your back (Unbalanced) and those which reduce the stress on your back (Balanced).

BALANCE IS THE KEY

