



Mr Madi

CONSULTANT ORTHOPAEDIC AND
SPINAL SURGEON



SCAN ME



PATIENT GUIDE · EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

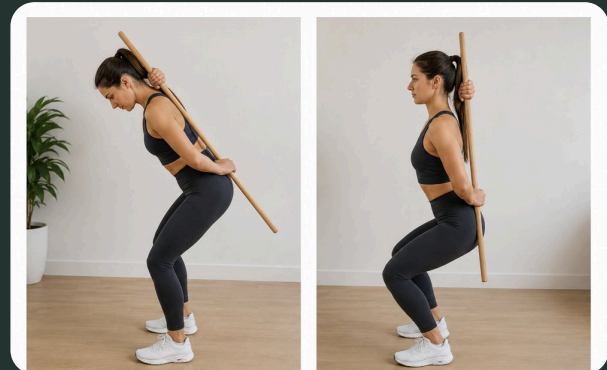
Protecting your back

Recovering from low back pain is not just about easing the pain. It is about giving your spine the right environment to heal, and a big part of that is avoiding repeated irritation of sensitive structures. Many everyday activities load the lower back through bending from the waist. Moving from your hips and knees instead, while keeping your lower back's natural curve, can ease that strain and let symptoms settle.

THE MOVE THAT DOES MOST OF THE
WORK

Hinge from your hips, not your waist.

The hip hinge is the foundation of healthy spinal movement. Instead of bending forward from the waist, let the movement come from your hips as your knees bend slightly, so your lower back keeps its natural curve. With practice it becomes automatic and takes a lot of unnecessary stress off your spine.



● LEFT: AVOID ● RIGHT: BETTER

1

Sitting down & standing up

Out of a chair



● LEFT: BETTER ● RIGHT: AVOID

Move to the front edge and bring your feet under your knees. Lean forward slightly from the hips with your chest lifted, then stand using your legs. Reverse it to sit, lowering under control.

Driving



● LEFT: AVOID ● RIGHT: BETTER

Set the seat to support the small of your back, using the lumbar setting or a small roll or wedge. Sit upright so the lower back keeps its inward curve, and stop every 30 to 60 minutes on longer drives to walk and stretch.

2

Bending & reaching

At the sink



● LEFT: AVOID ● RIGHT: BETTER

Bend from your hips, not the waist, and keep your chest lifted when you lean in to rinse. A foot on a small step or stool brings the sink to a comfortable height.

Picking up a bag



● LEFT: AVOID ● RIGHT: BETTER

Bend through your hips and knees and keep the object close to your body. Hold your lower back's natural curve and do not round forward. The closer the load, the less strain on your back.

3

Caring for a baby

Baby into the car



● LEFT: AVOID ● RIGHT: BETTER

Hold the baby close to your chest, not at arm's length, and keep your body close to the car. Stand tall, bend your knees, and avoid twisting or bending from the waist.

Changing a baby



● LEFT: AVOID ● RIGHT: BETTER

Use a changing surface at about waist height so you are not bending forward. If you find yourself leaning over for long, raise the surface or change position more often.

4

Lifting safely

Lifting a load



● LEFT: AVOID ● RIGHT: BETTER

Bend through your hips and knees, chest lifted, lower back's natural curve held, and hold the load close. Do not twist as you lift; turn your feet instead.

Safe lifting, in short

- ✓ Bend through your hips and knees
- ✓ Keep your chest lifted
- ✓ Hold the load close to your body
- ✓ Keep your lower back's natural curve
- ✓ Turn your feet instead of twisting

Two timing habits that protect you

- 1 Go easy in the first 30 minutes after getting up.** Your discs absorb fluid overnight and can be more vulnerable just after waking, so avoid heavy lifting early on.
- 2 Do not lift straight after a long sit.** Sitting stiffens the spine and surrounding muscles. After more than 40 minutes seated, stand, walk and loosen up before any significant lift.

The takeaway

The goal is not to avoid movement but to move more efficiently. Most everyday tasks are safe if you keep a neutral spine, hinge from your hips, and let your strong leg muscles do the work instead of your back.

Small changes to how you sit, stand, bend and lift can make a real difference to your symptoms, and may lower the chance of future flare-ups.

A note before you start

This guide offers general self-care information, not personal medical advice. If your pain is severe, followed a fall or injury, spreads down a leg, or comes with numbness, weakness, fever or changes in bladder or bowel control, seek medical help promptly. If your symptoms are not settling, please arrange a review for advice suited to you.



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