

Sweetwater Pain & Spine

Home Exercise Handout

Lumbar Radiculopathy

Lumbar radiculopathy occurs when a nerve root in the lower back is compressed or irritated — most often by a herniated disc — causing pain, numbness, or tingling that radiates into the buttock, leg, or foot. These exercises are selected to reduce disc pressure on the nerve, restore lumbar extension, improve sciatic nerve mobility, and build the core stability needed to protect the spine during daily activities. Perform within a pain-free or centralizing range — if leg symptoms worsen, stop and contact our office.

1 McKenzie Press-Up (Prone Extension)

2–3 sets • 10 reps • Hold 2 sec • 1–2x daily

1



SET UP

Lie face down.
Place your hands under your shoulders in a push-up position.
Relax your legs and feet.

2



PRESS UP

Keeping the pelvis and hips relaxed on the floor, press up through your arms to extend your lumbar spine.
Allow your lower back to sag.
Look forward.
Do not force range.

3



HOLD

Hold this position for 2 seconds.
Focus on a gentle extension in your lower back.
Breathe normally.

4



LOWER AND REPEAT

Lower slowly and in control.
Return to the starting position.
Perform 10 repetitions.
Repeat for the prescribed sets.



KEY RULE: If leg pain centralizes toward the spine with each rep, continue. If it worsens or moves further into the leg, stop and contact your provider.

2 Sciatic Nerve Floss (Neural Slider)

2–3 sets • 20 reps • 1–2x daily

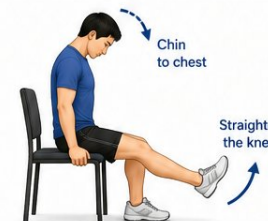
1



SET UP

Sit upright on the edge of a chair.
Both feet flat on the floor.
Tall posture, shoulders relaxed.
This is your starting position.

2



TENSION (SLIDER OUT)

Simultaneously straighten the affected knee (leg extends) while tilting the head forward (chin to chest).
This tensions the nerve.
Do not bounce or force range.

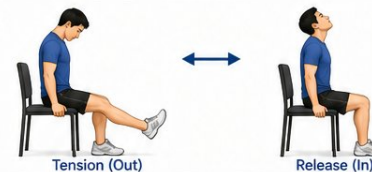
3



RELEASE (SLIDER IN)

Immediately reverse: bend the knee back while extending the neck (look up).
This releases the tension on the nerve.
Move smoothly and in control.

4



ALTERNATE

Alternate between both positions in a smooth, rhythmic manner.
Perform 20 repetitions.
Maintain a gentle, pain-free range throughout.



KEY RULE: A gentle pulling or tightness behind the knee is normal. If you feel sharp pain or if symptoms worsen or move further down the leg, stop and reduce your range or contact your provider.

3 Standing Repeated Extension

2–3 sets • 10 reps • Hold 2 sec • Every 2 hours when active

1



SET UP

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart.
Place both hands on lower back, fingers pointing down.
Keep your chest up and core relaxed.

2



EXTEND BACKWARD

Keeping knees straight, bend backward at the waist as far as comfortable.
Use your hands on your lower back for support.
Do not force range.

3



HOLD

Hold this extended position for 2 seconds.
You should feel a gentle stretch in your lower back.
Do not hold your breath.

4



RETURN & REPEAT

Return to the upright position.
Repeat 10 times per set.
Perform 2–3 sets.
Move smoothly and in control.

4 Modified Dead Bug

2–3 sets • 8–12 reps per side • 1–2x daily

1



SET UP

Lie on your back.
Knees at 90°, arms toward the ceiling.
Press your lower back firmly into the floor.
Maintain this throughout.

2



LOWER ONE ARM

Lower one arm overhead only as far as you can without losing the flat back — often a very small range initially.
Keep your lower back pressed into the floor.
Move slowly and with control.

3



RETURN & ALTERNATE

Return the arm to the start.
Repeat on the other side.
Keep the legs still.
Do not let your lower back arch or lift off the floor.

■ Stop any exercise that causes sharp pain, new numbness or weakness, or worsening of symptoms, and contact our office. These exercises supplement but do not replace your provider's individualized plan.

Questions or concerns? Call Sweetwater Pain & Spine: (775) 870-1480

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