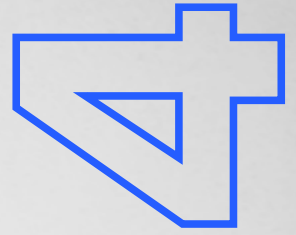


A Personalized Guide From:



YOUR PERSONALIZED
BACK PAIN
PHASE ASSESSMENT



YOU ARE HERE

PHASE: 4



Phase 1



get your back pain under control

Phase 2



fix the muscle imbalance

Phase 3



mobility & strength

Phase 4



maintenance

PHASE 3:

MAINTENANCE

Phase 4: Maintenance

DAY PAIN	< 1 day over 4 weeks
NIGHT PAIN	< 1 day over 4 weeks
TIME ON FEET	60+ minutes
GLUTES	Using abdominal & glute muscles is a habit for everyday activities. You regularly exercise them.
MOBILITY	No pain bending or twisting in all activities
What it's like today	
ACTIVITIES	I can do just about anything within reason without back pain. I am confident my back won't bother me as long as I move well and use my ab and glute muscles.
X-RAY / MRI	Normal to Severe and anywhere in between. (Who cares what the x-ray / MRI looks like if I feel this great?!)
RE: SURGERY	No back surgery needed, I feel 25 years younger!
I SAY THIS OUTLOUD	<i>"I never thought I could feel this great after being told I needed back surgery." "It's incredible how my back healed so well after I focused on my abs and glutes." "My hips, knees, and feet have all improved since I've fixed all my muscle imbalances."</i>
JOINT FEELS LIKE	It pops at times but there is no pain. You rarely think about your back anymore because it hasn't hurt in a long time.
MAIN CONCERNING THOUGHT	<i>"I need to keep using my abs and glutes so I can enjoy my life to the fullest." "I need to take those trips now that I can sight see without my back slowing me down." "I plan to dance the next chance I get!"</i>
HOW IT AFFECTS LIFE	Back pain is rare and if it happens, you know why and what to do about it. You don't feel limited in anything in life. If there's something you can't do yet, you know how to get stronger so that you can do it eventually.
Bottom Line	You've cured your back problem! You're only limited by your strength and endurance. But you can improve that!

4 START HERE WATCH THIS FIRST



The methodology

The differences between phases



Problems to be aware of at each phase

How to move through each phase quickly and safely



8 separate tracks each covering specific back problems



This video explains the entire process covered in the **Back Pain Recovery Program**.

**GOT IT?
LET'S SEE
YOUR CURRENT PHASE!**

4 YOUR PHASE

Phase 4 Overview



This video provides an overview of what goals & activities to focus on in Phase 4

**No Day Pain For
4+ Weeks**

**No Night Pain
For 4+ Weeks**

**Time On Feet
+60 Minutes**

**Using abs &
glutes is a habit
for all activities**

**No pain bending or
twisting in all activities**



WHEN YOU'RE IN PHASE 4

This is the maintenance phase. You're feeling great because it's been a while since you've had symptoms (4 weeks or more) and you're not limited in anything you want to do. Maintaining your levels of strength and endurance are the keys to keeping your back healthy for the rest of your life.

People in Phase 4 have absolutely no desire to have back surgery or visit the doctor for help. The only time they're talking to healthcare professionals regarding their back is to see if there's anything missing from their plan to further optimize their back health. Things like supplements, vitamins, and special exercise routines.

Exercise is a regular part of life. People here have realized that they feel best in their back when they're exercising at least 2 or 3 times a week. They'll do their weight training exercises on their "heavy" workout days, then do "light" exercises like going for a 20 to 30+ minute walk. Most can confidently get back to exercising in the gym and doing heavy yardwork.

No time with family and friends is ever missed because of a bad back day. Long road trips, international flights, and sightseeing on vacation are all on the table for you to partake in. You're free to go dance when the music gets good. Even sports like tennis, running, pickleball, golf, and more are just fine to do.

Your MRI may still show there is osteoarthritis, bone spurs, disc damage, pinched nerves and more in your spine, but you don't need to worry about it if your back is feeling well and you're staying active.

The big questions to consider here are:

Do you feel you've truly fixed the muscle imbalance?

Are you comfortable with what to do to maintain yourself here in Phase 4?

Is your exercise technique good enough to keep your spine healthy indefinitely?



4

THE BIG CHALLENGE:

MAINTAIN NEW HABITS



The biggest problem in Phase 4 is staying consistent with doing exercises that are productive rather than destructive for your spine health.

People often pick up new exercises that inadvertently begin to exercise back muscles more than abdominals. This throws you back into a muscle imbalance and begins to irritate your spine joints and discs.

You can solve this problem by figuring out how to get your glutes active during any exercise you choose to take on. It might be as simple as slowing down to focus on using your abs and glutes or adjusting your technique so you're more glute muscle dominant.

Some people figure out how to use their glutes easily, but some seek out our help to make sure they're doing the right things to stay healthy and avoid spine surgery.

The 2nd problem that creeps up is keeping a consistent workout routine. Not resuming weekly exercise after a holiday season, a vacation, or an illness are the most common situations that cause people to backslide.

It happens to everyone! You have a period of time when your routine changes, but you "forget" to put exercise in your schedule once life goes back to normal.

The ideal is that you don't miss a workout at all, but that's not always realistic. Especially if you're dealing with an illness. It's more important to take care of your illness and recover so you can safely get back to your workouts.

4

TREATMENTS TO FOCUS ON

IN PHASE 4

You're free to do so much in Phase 4. Just follow the guidelines of consistently using your abs and glutes and avoiding using your back muscles too much. Some people can do certain exercises and use their abs & glutes well, while others cannot use their abs & glutes well on the same exercise. You've got to find what consistently works for you. Some suggestions are:

1

Abdominal Strengthening Exercises

- Sit ups for time - maintain good form, keep your heels touching the floor (don't pin your feet under anything), and flatten your back when you're in the down position. Work up to doing 100-200 reps.
- Weighted sit-ups - same technique as above, but now holding onto a weight. Start with 5 pounds, and work your way up to 20+.

2

Glute Strengthening Exercises

- Deadlifts & Squats - Use a kettlebell, dumbbell, or barbell with enough weight to challenge your glutes. Work your way up to doing 10 sets of 10 reps.
- Variations for deadlifts include deficit deadlifts, partial deadlifts, rackpull deadlifts, and single leg deadlifts.
- Variations for squats include back squats, front squats, side squats, partial squats, and mini squats.
- You can do more than what's mentioned here, just make sure you're fatiguing your glutes more than other muscles.

3

Cardiovascular Exercise (always focus on using abs & glutes)

- Walking / Jogging
- Elliptical
- Cycling
- Swimming
- Racquet sports
- Ball sports

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE IN PHASE 4

You're able to do just about anything you want. You can enjoy your life and spend time with the people you love most. Go ahead and be active in pursuing your bucket list or seeing the world.

But you must remain vigilant about using your abs & glutes every day, and especially when you exercise. If you're not doing this, then you're likely to get a back pain flare up because you've got a history of back problems and susceptibility to developing the muscle imbalance again.



To get here in phase 4, you have to had reached these symptom criteria:

- Day pain < 1 day in 4 weeks
- Night pain < 1 day in 4 weeks
- Tolerating being on your feet standing and walking combined for +60 minutes
- Abs & glutes work well just about all the time. It's a habit now.
- No pain bending or twisting in all activities

Now your goal should be to put even more time between you and the last time you dealt with back pain symptoms by maintaining a consistent exercise routine.

Can you go 2 months? 6 months? 2 years?

What about 10+ years?

THE BOTTOM LINE

PHASE 4 IS ABOUT BECOMING THE PERSON WHO REGULARLY EXERCISES THEIR ABS & GLUTES.

...AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO CRAZY AND LIFT HUNDREDS OF POUNDS OR WALK MARATHON DISTANCES. (but you can work up to that if you want to)

...YOU JUST HAVE TO FIGURE OUT THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF EXERCISE, WITH THE RIGHT WEIGHTS AND RIGHT LENGTH OF TIME AND INTENSITY TO DO CARDIO.

It might be as simple as lifting weights (20-40 pounds) for 20 minutes 2 times per week and walking 30 minutes 2 times per week...literally.

You'll need to make adjustments based on your specific lifestyle demands.

WHY IT'S CHALLENGING HERE

You've got to use your glutes everyday
Weightlifting can be difficult for some people

Cardio exercise might be time consuming

You have to become the person who doesn't negotiate themselves out of exercise.

YOU NEED TO GET BETTER BECAUSE

Your back is the healthiest it's been in a long time

You can do so much...confidently
You know what to do to keep your back healthy for the rest of your life.

REMEMBER

Staying in Phase 4 means you have to stay consistent with exercising your glutes. Because you were diagnosed with back problems, that's proof that you have a tendency to overuse your back muscles when your abdominals & glutes are not doing their job. Fatiguing abdominal & glute muscles consistently will give you the best chance to never deal with back problems for the rest of your life.

Maintaining everyday use of your abs & glutes AND getting them tired when you exercise is a sure way to keep your muscles balanced.

New activities will come up, life situations will change, and your interests will evolve. It's your job to keep your ab & glute strength up no matter what happens.

You'll also need to be that person who exercises all the time if you're not there already. People in your life might say things to you because you've changed your routine (and maybe you look more fit too).

It doesn't mean you need to become a fanatic who counts all their calories, logs every workout, invests in

a new wardrobe, and now has a gym buddy...you can do this at home with some small weights and a walking route you like in your neighborhood.

Put on blinders when people tell you to focus on your back muscles. That's what flared up your back before.

Do 1 thing EVERYTIME you exercise - fatigue your ab & glute muscles. Make it a point to do an exercise that tires out those muscles. At least get them to burn a little if you made them burn a lot the last time.

It might be a bodyweight exercise... an exercise that uses weights...or a cardio exercise...or a combination of these.

Tire. Your. Abs. And. Glutes. Every. Workout.

That's how you'll keep your spine healthy for the rest of your life.

READY FOR **EXPERT HELP** TO **HEAL BACK PAIN AND** **AVOID SURGERY?**



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THIS IS THE PHASE YOU WILL BE IN IF YOU GET WORSE...

Phase 3: Mobility & Strength

DAY PAIN	< 1 day over 2 weeks
NIGHT PAIN	< 1 day over 2 weeks
TIME ON FEET	30-60 minutes
GLUTES	Achieved conscious control over abs & glutes, but back and/or quads take over during harder activities.
MOBILITY	Pain with bending / twisting in 1 direction only with a specific activity or for a part of the day.

	What it's like today	Next level to reach
ACTIVITIES	Most daily activities are no problem. I can work around the ones that hurt. Back pain comes on only if I push myself too much.	I can do just about anything within reason without back pain. I am confident my back won't bother me as long as I move well and use my abs & glutes.
X-RAY / MRI	Normal to Severe and anywhere in between.	It will probably look the same as before.
RE: SURGERY	You'll likely need spine surgery in 3-5 years	No spine surgery needed, I feel 25 years younger!
I SAY THIS OUTLOUD	<i>"I feel my back if I walk more than 30-60 minutes." "I can exercise as long as I'm careful with my back." "My back isn't 100% but I guess this is what's it's like at my age now."</i>	<i>"I never thought I could feel this great after being told I needed spine surgery." "It's incredible how my back healed so well after I focused on my abs & glutes."</i>
JOINT FEELS LIKE	Little to no back stiffness. Can take on a busy day without feeling miserable for while after.	My back pops or feels off at times but there is no pain.
MAIN CONCERNING THOUGHT	<i>"I hope I can keep my back feeling like this so I can avoid spine surgery."</i>	<i>"I need to keep using my abs & glutes so I can enjoy my life to the fullest."</i>
HOW IT AFFECTS LIFE	Back pain comes and goes, but is never bad enough to need medications or doctor visits. There are definitely a handful of activities that are avoided because they will hurt. Balance is good.	Back pain is rare and if it happens, you know why and what to do about it. You don't feel limited in anything in life. If there's something you can't do yet, you know how to get stronger so that you can do it eventually.

3 YOUR PHASE

Phase 3 Overview



This video provides an overview of what goals & activities to focus on in Phase 3

**Day Pain < 1 day
over 2 weeks**

**Night Pain < 1
day over 2 weeks**

**Time On Feet
30-60 Minutes**

**Abs & glutes flex on
command, but other
muscles take over
when activities get
hard**

**Pain bending/
twisting in 1
direction only in
certain activities or
part of the day**



WHEN YOU'RE IN PHASE 3

In Phase 3, you're feeling good most of the time. The back is only a problem 1 or 2 times a month, and you're able to do most things.

BUT, there's usually something in your life that brings on the back pain. And it's not terrible pain most of the time...just a little nagging pain that lets you know your back problem is still there.

Every few months, the back pain might become more severe, but it goes away within a day or so. This is "manageable" lower back pain as most people see it. Even healthcare professionals will tell you this is the best it's going to get, given your age, old injuries, and family history of spine problems. "I'm just thankful my back isn't hurting every week like before!" is the thought many people have when they're in Phase 3.

Doctors and physical therapists will congratulate you at this point and tell you they're done working with you. They'll "discharge" you from their care and leave you to fend for yourself, assuming you've got it from here. In their book, you're a success story because the majority of their back pain patients have back pain every day and don't get better visit to visit. The only advice they'll offer you is to keep up a walking routine, take your vitamins/supplements, and manage your weight.

The reality is that you've still got a muscle imbalance to work on. It may have never even been addressed at all! Usually the abdominal and glute muscles are severely weak in Phase 3 and you need to figure out how to use your abs and glutes well in everyday activities, starting with basic walking.

Once you can get the abs and glutes to work better throughout the day, then you have a chance at getting them stronger. The stronger your abs and glutes get, the better your back will feel week to week. As you continue strengthening and using your abs and glutes, the weeks lengthen past a month.

There's **HUGE** potential to get your lumbar spine the strongest and healthiest it's been in a long time...but you have to follow the plan we've developed for you in the Back Pain Recovery Program.



3

THE BIG CHALLENGE:

MUSCLES BALANCED IN EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES



In Phase 3, you've got to make using your abdominal and glute muscles a habit. Using these muscles in daily activities like walking, taking care of your home, running errands, and working is rarely (if ever) discussed while recovering from back problems. And because patients aren't taught about this, they're set up for going back to suffering from a flared-up back again sometime in the future.

Take walking as an example. Doctors and surgeons NEVER show you how to walk using the right muscles, it's not something they learned about in school. They focus on learning everything there is to know about medications, injections, and surgery. Physical therapists rarely ever show their patients HOW TO walk, they usually instruct them to walk on their treadmill and ask them to keep it up at home. They're used to working with people who have just had surgery, so getting back to being able to walk is their main goal.

You've likely not thought much about what muscles you use when walking so it will probably feel awkward to do it here in Phase 3. But going through that will set you up to make using your abs and glutes a normal, everyday way of moving. It needs to become your default way of moving.

If you do not make this shift in your life, then you'll fall back into using the back muscles too much and start to add too much compression to the spine joints and discs. In other words, you'll feed the root problem that causes all the major spine problems like arthritis, disc herniations, stenosis, disc degeneration, and sciatica.

3

TREATMENTS TO FOCUS ON

IN PHASE 3

Walking is just one of many activities to work on in Phase 3. In fact, we get people starting on “ab/glute walking” in Phase 2. Now you’ve got to learn how to use your abs and glutes in squatting and squatting with weights. We also like to have our clients begin to lengthen the amount of time they can walk while making their abs and glute muscles more tired than their back and thigh muscles. The number of reps here varies depending on your ability. Choose the number of reps that fatigue the muscle you’re targeting.

1

Advanced Abdominal Muscle Exercises

- Level 1 Abdominal Curls Reps - lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat. Flatten your lower back to activate your lower abs. Tuck your chin to make a double chin. Reach your fingertips just over your kneecaps and reach beyond as far as you can without losing lower abdominal activation. Then return to starting position.
- Level 2 Abdominal Curl Reps - same as level 1, except keep your legs flat instead of bending your knees. Reach your hands toward your kneecaps and down your shins. Focus on using the lower abdominals by flattening your spine.
- Full range sit-ups - Lie on your back with legs flat and arms reaching overhead. Flatten your lower back, then throw your arms toward your legs. Using momentum, bring your upper body into a sitting position while reaching your hands to your feet. Return to the start position by flattening your lower back again. Focus on using your lower abs on the way up and down.

2

Advanced Glute Muscle Exercises

- Standing Mini Squats - Drop only 1 to 2 inches from standing while flattening the lower back to tighten the abs and tightening the glute muscles. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Weighted Mini Squats - Do the same squat as above but now hold a small weight. The weight has to be enough to challenge your abs and glutes but still allow you to maintain the correct form.
- Weighted Bridges - Place a weight over your hips then hold for 10 seconds at a time while making sure to fatigue the glutes more than any other muscle. Lower abs

3

Cardio Exercises

- Walking - with emphasis to consciously flex the ab and glute muscles in the right timing.
- Elliptical - Only do this if you can use your abs and glutes properly as you would while walking. Flex the glute on the same side when pressing down on a pedal. Hold the abs mildly activated the whole time.
- Cycling - Only do this if you can make your glutes get more tired than your thigh muscles. Emphasize flexing your glute on the downstroke each time you pedal. Hold the abs mildly activated the whole time.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE IN PHASE 3

Work on treatments from Phase 3 until you improve enough to move into Phase 4 and begin the next treatments.

Your goal is to go from having these symptom criteria:

- Day Pain < 1 day in 2 weeks
- Night pain < 1 day in 2 weeks
- Time On Feet 30-60 Minutes
- Abs & glutes flex...but other muscles take over when activities get hard
- Pain bending/twisting in 1 direction only in

And get to having these symptom criteria:

- Day pain < 1 day in 4 weeks
- Night pain < 1 day in 4 weeks
- Tolerating being on your feet standing and walking combined for +60 minutes
- Abs & glutes work well just about all the time. It's a habit now.
- No pain when bending or twisting in all

***You cannot move out of Phase 3 until ALL goals have been reached or surpassed.**

****Another way of saying this is, you cannot stop doing Phase 3 treatments until you no longer have any of the symptom criteria from Phase 3.**

*****Don't move onto Phase 4 unless you meet ALL the symptom criteria for Phase 4**

THE BOTTOM LINE

PHASE 3 IS FOCUSED ON STRENGTHENING KEY MUSCLES TO TAKE PRESSURE OFF THE SPINE JOINTS AND DISCS CONSISTENTLY

**Stronger Abs/Glutes + Conscious Ab/Glute Control =
HEALTHY SPINE JOINTS & DISCS**

WHY IT'S CHALLENGING HERE

Everyone will tell you this is as good as your spine is ever going to be

Monthly back flare-ups still happen

There's worry you'll eventually need surgery

YOU MUST GET BETTER BECAUSE

There's potential for you to feel even better.

You don't want to say you have a "bad back"

You've got places to be, people to see, and your spine shouldn't keep you from that.

REMEMBER

The key to making it out of Phase 3 is getting the 2 key muscle groups stronger by using them in everyday activities. Lower abdominals & glutes. If you cannot figure out how to make these muscles work throughout the day, then you'll likely continue to have symptoms associated with Phase 3.

Another problem people face in Phase 3 is settling. Motivation declines because they've improved enough to feel a major difference in their back. Especially if they were going through symptoms from Phase 1 because they were really bad at that time and now they're feeling great comparatively.

Healthcare professionals will end treatment and say you're fine at this point. But they don't know how to identify or treat muscle imbalances. And if you have them and have not focused on fixing them, then they're going to creep back up on you eventually.

What's the plan then? When back pain flares up 1-2 months from now. Maybe you can do those PT exercises or pick up that stretching routine (or get another injection) and it will go away. But you can only do that so many times before it stops helping.

Your best solution is to fix the root of the problem so you don't have to live with it the rest of your life.

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