

SUB-ACUTE LEVEL II INSTRUCTIONS

The worst is over. Be careful and keep going.

The nature of the sub-acute phase is still to be termed as **critical**. Although the pain has subsided and the symptoms have lessened, residual inflammation is present. The process towards optimal health has begun, but the acute phase is only one step behind. Caution is to be taken and strict adherence to your specific care plan is essential.

RELAXATION:

Develop the technique of relaxation that works best for you and use it regularly.

EXERCISE FOR LOW BACK:

Level 2 exercises increase flexibility and muscle tone as well as increase circulation and promote healing. All exercises are to be done in the pain-free range, 3 times per day up to 12 repetitions of each. They are as follows:

A. **ALL FOURS SPINAL STRETCH** - While on hands and knees, roll your back up so it makes a hump. Then lift your head up and curl your back in the opposite direction. Then repeat.

In yoga, this exercise is called the cat cow pose.

B. **ALTERNATE ARM LIFT**- While in the all fours position on the floor, lift right arm forward over head with elbow straight, hold for 3 seconds. Then lift your left arm up. Repeat.

C. **ALTERNATE LEG LIFT** - Same position. Lift right leg up toward ceiling with knee bent, hold for 3 seconds. Then repeat with left leg. If this is painful, you can put a pillow behind your knees between the buttocks and the calves.

D. **LOW BACK KNEELING STRETCH** - From all fours position, recline back so that buttocks rest on heels. Breathe slowly into the low back.

E. **FLOOR SPINAL TWIST** - Lie on your left side. Let your right arm drop behind you and right leg move forward. Feel the stretch between the shoulder and pelvic girdle. Now lie on right side and repeat.

Breathe in the extremes of this motion to stretch the tissue between the ribs.

EXERCISE FOR NECK:

These are active movement exercises. They are to be done slowly and you should go as far as you can without causing pain. Each exercise should be done 10 to 12 times, 2 to 3 times daily. Hold the end position for 3 to 5 seconds without straining.

A. Allow your head to drop forward and then slightly backwards. If you feel dizzy or light headed even slightly STOP IMMEDIATELY Report your symptoms to Dr Bob. If they persist after you stop exercising, go to the hospital immediately.

B. Allow your right ear to drop down to your right shoulder and then your left ear to your left shoulder. Make sure not to be turning your head at the same time.

C. Turn your head to the right and then turn your head to the left. Stretch slightly at the extreme of this motion.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE SUB-ACUTE STAGE LEVEL II

1. Moist heat/cold treatments at home can be used initially with a gradual decrease in their application.
2. Supports (neck collars - splints) are to be worn only during certain activities and under the advisement of the doctor. They are not to be used for extended periods of time during the sub-acute phase.
3. Following your guidelines will move you through this stage in usually one to two weeks.