

Advice for a lumbar disc bulge

Your chiropractor has diagnosed a disc bulge in your lumbar spine. These most commonly occur in the bottom two discs (L4/5 and L5/S1). There are some things that you should and should not be doing to help in the healing process. To aid your healing and have the best results, please follow the instructions below.

Do Not

- Bend forward or lift any objects (it's the action not the weight)
- Twist or rotate – stretching is ok
- Apply heat – you are adding heat to inflammation.
- Sit for longer than 15 minutes
- Stand still on one spot
- Slump, especially on the couch. Stay off the couch or low chairs altogether, sit on a firm chair, dining room chairs with arms are the best.

Do

- Move
- Maintain the curve in your lumbar spine. A rolled up towel can be useful to maintain the curve when sitting or driving
- When getting in or out of the car, keep your knees together as much as possible and swivel, do not rotate through your lower spine
- To get out of bed, keep your knees together, roll on to your side, and push yourself up on your elbow using your arms. Do not use your abdominal muscles to pull yourself up, but keep them braced.
- Stand up and move a little after sitting for more than 20 minutes.
- Bend your knees and keep the curve in your back when lifting anything.
- Ice – 20 minutes on (to the point of numbness), 40 minutes off, three times a day.
- Sleep on your side with a towel between your knees, or on your back with pillows under your knees

Some extra activities and tips

- Lying on your back with hips bent and knees at 90 degrees can provide relief. Or putting your feet up on a chair – see below.



- Small pelvic rotations, like you are using a hula hoop, can help restore movement. 10 to 20 rotations in each direction, multiple times a day. DO NOT push into the pain; you should feel no more than slight discomfort.
- Lying on your stomach leave the lower half of the body on the floor, and use your arms to lift the upper body. This should be a passive motion, using the upper body to lift the trunk, not like in yoga where you use your muscles to arch your back, and taken to the point where you can relax your muscles (pictured below left). Hold this position for 10 to 20 seconds, and then go back to lying on your stomach. Repeat 10 times then go into child yoga pose (pictured below right). If this increases the pain on your lower back, or causes pain in the legs, discontinue immediately and tell your chiropractor.

