

Week one on a 45° back-extension bench

A one-page card from lowbackpaincoach.com. General exercise information, not medical advice.

- ✓ **Talk to your doctor before you start.** This is for adults with long-running back pain who are cleared to exercise. The emergency signs are at the bottom of this page.
- ✓ **Use a 45-degree bench.** Your body leans forward over an angled pad. A vertical 90-degree Roman chair is a different machine, and this card is not written for it.
- ✓ **Set the pad.** Its top edge sits just below the crease where your thighs meet your pelvis. Your hips rest on the pad and your feet are anchored under the roller.
- ✓ **Hold a straight line and stop there.** Arms crossed, rise until your shoulders, hips and ankles line up. Do not arch past it, and do not bounce.
- ✓ **Session one is three short holds.** 3 holds of 15 seconds with 60 seconds of rest between them. 10 seconds is a fine start. Start with less than you think you can do.
- ✓ **Write down how your back feels tomorrow.** Your baseline is your usual pain on an ordinary day, from 1 to 10. Log the same scale the next morning, and note whether any pain is in your legs.

What tomorrow's log sets

Worse than baseline: about 30% shorter holds next time, never under 5 seconds.

The same as baseline: repeat it, unless the previous training day's next-morning check-in was also at or below baseline, and neither was higher than your pain before that session.

Below baseline: add 5 seconds to the shortest hold (the first, if several match). A check-in higher than the pain you logged before that session does not count.

Pain in your legs: stop the extension work and do not add load.

Where the program goes from here

Holds, then a small range, then full-range reps with body weight, then a plate at your chest, one change at a time.

Each stage starts easy. Two or three sessions a week, with a day between. This exact progression has not been tested in a trial. Exercise in general is part of the WHO 2023 guideline for chronic low back pain; that is not about this card or any app.

Go to emergency care now if

New numbness, tingling or a change in feeling around the groin, inner thighs, genitals or anus. New bladder or bowel changes. New changes in sexual function. New pain, tingling, numbness or weakness in both legs. A leg or foot that is getting weaker. Back pain after a recent serious accident.

See a clinician today if

Other new weakness or numbness in one leg or foot. Fever or chills with back pain. New pain after a smaller fall or knock. Weight loss you did not try for, or a history of cancer. Pain that is getting worse fast. Pain that is constant at rest and worse at night, not tied to movement. Use urgent care if you cannot get an appointment today.

Low Back Pain Coach is the guided version of this card: a voice counts the holds and rest, and your next-morning log sets the next session. The first guided session is free. After that it is \$59.99 a year or \$9.99 a month, with a 7-day free trial for eligible new subscribers. It needs a 45-degree bench. lowbackpaincoach.com/week-one-on-a-45-degree-bench/