

Stop Stretching Your Low Back (Low Back Pain – Part 1) By Debra Pentz, DC

Low back pain is the number one injury complaint for golfers. It's complicated, so we have a 2 part series on low back pain. Part one discusses the importance of flexibility and part two (in the next newsletter – don't miss it!) discusses stability to protect the low back.

Lots of golfers think their low back feels stiff, so they try to stretch it out. A better approach to treating and preventing low back pain targets flexibility for the upper back and hips. The upper back and hips are designed for mobility – the lower back is not.

To test the upper back - Lie on your side. Bend both knees. Take the downside hand and place it on the top knee – this keeps the knees stabilized. Bend the top arm so that the elbow is at chin height. Reach back with the elbow, rotating the upper back. The goal is to have both shoulders touch the ground. If both shoulders are not in contact with the floor, you have a flexibility problem.

The fix – Do the “test” movement daily until both shoulders touch the floor. Each stretch should be held 5 to 10 seconds. Repeat 5 to 10 times, depending on how restricted you are.



To test the hips – Lie on your back - knees up, feet spread apart. Allow the knees to drop from side to side. If you feel any tightness, the fix is the same as the test. The key to making this exercise effective – keep the low back on the ground as the knees drop from side to side.

