A guide for patients with thoracic back pain

About the condition
The thoracic spine is designed to be strong and stable to allow us to stand upright and to protect the vital internal organs in the chest. As this area is very stable, it is less prone to the injuries experienced by the cervical and lumbar spine. It is susceptible to pain and stiffness associated with poor posture though and this is the most common reason for mid back pain.

Symptoms
- Pain.
- Stiffness when turning the upper trunk.
- Pain and a feeling of restriction taking a deep breath.

What you can do to help
- Always maintain good posture. Look at your work posture.
- Avoid staying in one position for too long. Keep moving.
- Spread the load when lifting or carrying to protect your back. Regularly carry out the exercises over the page as indicated by your physiotherapist.

Contact us

Customer Care Team
If you have a query about our health services, or would like to comment, compliment or complain about Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, you can contact the Customer Care Team.

Phone: 0300 123 1807, 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
Please say if you would like the team to call you back
Text: 07899 903499 Email: kcht.cct@nhs.net

Address: Customer Care Team, Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, Unit J, Concept Court, Shearway Business Park, Folkestone, Kent CT19 4RJ Web: www.kentcht.nhs.uk

If you need communication support, an interpreter or this information in another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read or large print, please ask a member of staff.

You will be asked for your agreement to treatment and, if necessary, your permission to share your personal information.

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**Exercises**

- **Exercise 1:**
  - **Instructions:**
    - Sit on a chair with your fingers clasped behind your neck.
    - Lean the affected part of the thoracic spine against the back of the chair so that the chair supports the lower of the vertebrae to be mobilised. While inhaling push your shoulders over the edge of the chair, at the same time lean back to straighten the spine.
  - **Repetition:** Repeat ________ times.

- **Exercise 2:**
  - **Instructions:**
    - Sit with your back straight and feet firmly on the floor.
    - Pull your shoulder blades together while turning your thumbs and hands outwards.
  - **Repetition:** Repeat ________ times.

- **Exercise 3:**
  - **Instructions:**
    - Crawling position.
    - Let your arms slide along the floor as far as possible. Push your bottom back and down and the chest towards the floor. Breathe out while doing the exercise.
  - **Repetition:** Repeat ________ times.

- **Exercise 4:**
  - **Instructions:**
    - Sit on a chair.
    - Take hold of the back of a chair. Look over your shoulder while turning your upper body.
  - **Repetition:** Hold ________ seconds. Repeat ________ times.

- **Exercise 5:**
  - **Instructions:**
    - Sit. Hold your hands and lift your arms over your head.
    - Breathe in and slowly bend to the side. Breathe out and return to the starting position.
  - **Repetition:** Repeat ________ times.

- **Exercise 6:**
  - **Instructions:**
    - Lying face down, arms behind your back.
    - Lift your upper trunk off the floor and pull your shoulder blades together. Look down at the floor while doing the exercise.
  - **Repetition:** Repeat ________ times.