

Welcome!

In this program, I will take you through key skills you need to keep your back healthy and functioning well throughout your lifespan. These are also the same skills that will help you recover from back problems like back pain and stiffness from various causes.

Each section in this program focuses on one locomotor skill. The skills are: Awareness, Alignment, Strength, Stability, Mobility, Release, Stretching, Thoughts & Feelings, and Personal Practice & Daily Life.

Modern science increasingly shows that movement is not just about your bones, joints, muscles, and ligaments. Movement is an extraordinarily complex activity. It happens through your locomotor tissues, but is coordinated by the nervous system, and is influenced by your breathing, habits, diet, thoughts, feelings, and environment. Your body and mind always function as one whole.

To move well throughout life, and to restore movement capacity when we have pain or limitations, we need a holistic approach that focuses on the skills of moving well. If you do not use it, you will lose it. Conversely, if you try safely and intelligently, you can regain and improve your capacities of movement. This program will show you how.

How to use this program

- Each section focuses on one skill, but they are interrelated. They are like the spokes of a wheel. All these skills come together to create effective movement. Please cycle through these skills over time—weeks to months whenever you find it convenient.
- If you wish to go through these skills in order, you could do them approximately in the same order the sections are presented in the program.
- The program is mostly practices. All practices are guided with instructions. Many lessons also contain information along with practices that will help you understand and apply principles. This is aimed at making you self-sufficient. If you understand what you are doing and why, and the keys to practicing a skill, you can easily repeat it on your own, and make it a habit. This self-sufficiency is a key goal; once you are reasonably proficient in these skills, they will protect your back and keep it healthy with little conscious effort on your part.
- Please read the brief guide with key principles and recommendations at the start of each section. It will help you do the practices effectively.
- There are many practice options under each skill—from different body positions and sometimes in different directions of movement. You do not have to do all of them. I have given you many options for two reasons. One, you can choose what works best for you at a particular time and start from there. Two, you can explore multiple options over time for variety and interest, and also to improve your resilience and adaptability.



- Once you have internalized these skills, you can create further variations for yourself. Or you can seek the help of a Svastha yoga teacher to do so.
- Wear comfortable clothes and use any suitable space at home. You will see me wearing ordinary clothes, practicing in an ordinary room, on an ordinary yoga mat. This is intentional—the more natural the setting and your approach to learning these skills is, the more they will become your habit, a part of you.

Pain Free Principle & Cautions

Please do not do any exercise or movement that creates or increases pain, causes you discomfort, or triggers a feeling of apprehension (the feeling that you are not sure if it is safe or that you may hurt yourself). Pain may arise immediately, or you may feel it later in the day. Either way, do reevaluate the exercise and make it gentler or choose another one.

Mostly, the exercises in this program are mindful and slow, with breathing and cautious guidance. Still, it is important that you monitor how your body feels and keep it safe. That is itself a significant skill. This is partly why we begin the program with awareness.

If you have any other health issues that may be of concern, please do check with your doctor or appropriate healthcare professional.

I hope this program sets you on an easy and enjoyable path to lifelong wellbeing for your low back.

Thank you for joining! I look forward to connecting more with all of you.

Dr. Ganesh Mohan