

by CNS

The moves: Performing pelvic tilts while sitting on an exercise ball.

PREVENT BACK INJURY - To improve lumbar spine mobility and help prevent lower back injury, firefighter Patricia Stone sits on a stability ball and alternates tucking the tailbone under and arching the lower back. CNS Photo by Nadia Borowski Scott. Works on: Lumbar spine mobility; abdominal muscles; lower-back injury prevention by learning control of the lower-back area.

Set up: Sit on the ball with the feet shoulder width apart on a no-slip surface. The ball is the correct size and inflated properly when the knees are slightly below the hips. Place one palm on the lower stomach between the belly button and pubic bone, and the back of the other hand on the lower back area. Only movement of the spine under the hands is allowed.

Steps: Keep the torso upright during this exercise. Using the abdominal muscles, tuck the tailbone under hips (bring the pubic bone closer to the bellybutton). Hold for a three count. Next, arch the lower back maximally (lengthen the area between the belly button and pubic bone).

Repetitions: 15 times in each direction.

Precautions: Consult with your physician before performing this exercise if you have a history of lower back pain.

Options: Try doing circles clockwise and counterclockwise.

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