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## **Instructions for Acute Lower Back Injury**

- Apply ice while lying on your side, with your knees slightly bent. Put a pillow between your knees to keep your pelvis level.
  - Use ice for 10-15 minutes per hour, as many hours as you can for the first few days after the onset of pain.
  - **Do not** leave the ice on for longer than 20 minutes at a time.
  - **Do not** put the ice pack directly against your skin. There must be at least a paper towel barrier (unless the pack has its own cover).
- **No** lifting anything heavier than five pounds.
- **Do not** reach overhead.
- Sit as little as possible. Try to alternate between lying down on your side, with a pillow between your legs, and walking.
  - If you are more comfortable lying on your back do so with a small pillow behind your knees to keep them bent slightly.
  - **Do not** lie on your stomach.
- If you must sit, **do not** sit on the couch or a very soft chair. Chairs do not have to be hard, just firm (like a desk chair).
- Stay out of the car unless absolutely necessary.
- Use warm showers only to clean yourself, **do not** let the hot water beat on your back.
- Following treatment, no matter how much better it feels, pretend you are still in pain. Avoid activities which you are told not to do as much as possible.