

The Best Lower Back Stretch

Spinal Decompression are an effective lower back stretch exercise used by Chinese and Russian lifters. It's like hanging up-side down on an inverted table. Except you can do this at home without spending hundreds of dollars on a chiropractor or doctor. Plus you can do it more frequently which is more effective.

Hang on a pullup bar with both palms facing you and your grip shoulder-width apart. If your legs touch the floor because your bar hangs too low, pull your legs up and cross them. But keep your lower back neutral and relaxed, no arching. Hang for a minute and relax.



Spinal Decompressions lets gravity stretch your spine vertically. You won't compress your spinal discs because there's no bending or arching of your lower back. So unlike toe touch stretches, spinal decompressions can't compress and irritate disc bulges that might cause your lower back pain. They'll reduce them, and you'll recover faster.

Spinal Decompressions also help with shoulder, wrist and elbow pain. The vertical stretch increase shoulder mobility. Notice how hanging on the bar looks like the lockout position during the Overhead Press. If you're struggling with lifting the bar correctly Overhead, hanging on the pullup bar can help you improve your form.

Spinal Decompressions also increase grip strength. This can help you with your Deadlifts. Lack of grip strength can limit how much time you hang on the bar. Hang as long as you can, your grip will improve. I don't use chalk or straps or the mixed grip. Just normal grip with both thumbs wrapped around the bar (not thumbless). Let your grip get stronger.

I'll hang for 30 seconds to a minute between sets and at the end of my workout. I've also setup a [doorway pullup bar](#) in my deskroom at home (costs < \$30 vs. hundreds of dollars for an inverted table!). Each time I walk out of my deskroom, I hang on the pullup for a few seconds. This counter-acts the spinal compression from sitting.

Spinal decompressions are the first exercise I do when I hurt my lower back. If you do this several times a day, you'll see that your lower back will quickly recover and that you'll be able to get back into Squats and Deadlift faster. Just make sure you treat the cause – lift with good form. That means neutral lower back, no rounding or excess arching.

See also

- <http://stronglifts.com/deadlift/>