



CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT

STRONG BACK, STRONG FUTURE

REGISTRATION EMAIL

Share this email with all employees at least two weeks prior to the start of the challenge.

WEEKLY CONTENT EMAILS

There are five emails to send out about every 5 days throughout the challenge. Try to be consistent. Make sure to add information about any events and/or incentives you will be offering throughout the campaign.

WEEKLY PARTICIPATION

In week one, participants are introduced to exercises designed to optimize their low back health. For the remainder of the challenge, they then can choose to complete the stretching routine, strengthening routine or both types of exercises each week to earn their stars and/or be entered into a raffle (NOTE: You and your planning team would be the ones to decide if you are going to offer a raffle with this campaign).

CAMPAIGN ENHANCEMENTS

Please see the list of optional ideas to help your participants be successful and enhance the experience.

REGISTRATION EMAIL: *Copy and paste the content below into your email software. Attach the PAR-Q pdf to this email.*

Join the Strong Back, Strong Future Challenge!

WHEN: Determine dates

WHY: According to Harvard Medical School, “A strong back benefits overall health, well-being, and functionality. Targeted exercises can help you build a strong back and protect against injury.”

WHAT: Strong Back, Strong Future: How to Optimize Your Low Back Health

This challenge is designed to empower you with effective exercises, expert advice, and proven strategies to support a healthier back and a brighter future. Each week, participants will learn practical tips—from stretches and strengthening to office ergonomics and safe lifting. These topics will be brought to life by short videos featuring local experts from Injury & Health Management Solutions, Inc. located in Williston, Vermont.

Here’s the playlist and weekly email themes:

Week	Topic	Video Clip Length
Days 1-5	Low Back Stretching &	6:26
	Low Back Strengthening	8:18
Days 6-10	Using your challenge tracker to determine your exercise plan	N/A
Days 11-15	Office Workstation Set Up	7:28
Days 16-20	Safe Lifting Mechanics	5:15
Days 21-25	Low Back: When to Seek Professional Care	4:06

Interested in focusing on your low back health?

Complete this [survey](#) (build a *registration survey in google forms or other survey tool*) or email **CONTACT PERSON** by **DEADLINE DATE** to receive the challenge tracker and the weekly communications. Enjoy!

NOTE: Check Your Readiness: If you have not been physically active in a while consider completing a [Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire \(PAR-Q\)](#) to help you decide if you need to talk to your doctor before beginning an exercise plan.

WEEKLY EMAIL #1 (DAYS 1-5): *Copy and paste the content below into your email software. Remember to attach the tracker and the Stretch_Strength_Exercise Guide to this email.*

STRONG BACK, STRONG FUTURE: LOW BACK STRETCHING & STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

Your spine is the central support system of your body and plays a vital role in nearly every movement you make. It helps you stand, sit, twist, bend, and carry the weight of your daily life. It also protects your spinal cord, a major part of your nervous system that connects your brain to the rest of your body. Understanding how your spine functions—and what it needs to stay healthy—is the first step in preventing pain and long-term injury. Poor back health can lead to discomfort, stiffness, reduced mobility, missed workdays, and even chronic issues that affect your overall quality of life. The good news is that many of these issues are preventable with simple, consistent habits.

This week we are going to introduce you to some low back stretching and strengthening exercises to optimize your back health. Then for the remaining weeks of the challenge you will get to choose whether you want to practice:

- ☐ [stretching exercises](#),
- ☐ [strengthening exercises](#) **OR**
- ☐ stretching AND strengthening exercises

and record your progress on your tracker.

TIME TO GET STARTED!

STEP #1: Click the links above to watch the videos that explain and demonstrate the exercises.

STEP #2: Save or print out attached exercise handout that gives you a step-by-step guide to do the exercises properly for duration of the challenge.

STEP #3: Try out the exercises to see which routine you want to focus on for the rest of the challenge. Next week you will set a goal on the challenge tracker, set up your exercise plan and follow it.

WEEKLY EMAIL #2 (DAY 6-10): *Copy and paste the content below into your email software. Share the tracker as an attachment again.*

STRONG BACK, STRONG FUTURE: SET YOUR GOAL ON THE CHALLENGE TRACKER

Last week we introduced you to some [stretching](#) and [strengthening](#) exercises to optimize your back health. If you did not view those videos, we strongly encourage you to do so now. Today you will choose which routine (stretching, strengthening, or both) you want to focus on for the remainder of the challenge by filling out the top section of your tracker.

SET UP YOUR PLAN

First, **check your readiness:** If you have not been physically active in a while, consider completing a [Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire \(PAR-Q\)](#) to help you decide if you need to talk to your doctor before beginning an exercise routine.

Second, choose which routine(s) you want to work on during the challenge, “**stretch**”, “**strength train**” or “**stretch AND strength train**.” Remember to check out the [handout of exercises](#) that is linked to your tracker to ensure that you are completing them properly. This handout is a step-by-step guide for all the stretching and strengthening exercises within each routine. You can also rewatch the videos at any time.

Third, **start your exercises and earn your stars!** Once you complete your workout click the relevant star to show you are done for that day for the week you are on. That’s it!

PRO TIP: Be sure to schedule your weekly workouts like an appointment on your calendar or set a reminder on your phone. If you are doing the strength training routine make sure you schedule your workouts on non-consecutive days.

WEEKLY EMAIL #3 (DAYS 11-15): *Copy and paste the content below into your email software.*

STRONG BACK, STRONG FUTURE: OFFICE WORKSTATION SET UP

We hope you are enjoying the exercise routine you have selected to focus on during the challenge. In addition to regular exercise, your workstation can have a significant impact on your back health. The key is setting up your workspace for optimal posture and comfort.

- **Start by adjusting your chair** so that your feet rest flat on the floor and your knees are level with your hips. This helps keep your spine aligned and reduces pressure on your lower back.
- **Position your screen at eye level** to avoid neck strain and ensure that your shoulders remain relaxed.
- **Your keyboard should be close enough that you can keep your elbows at a 90-degree angle** while typing, which reduces strain on your wrists and shoulders.
- If needed, **use a footrest** to support your feet and improve posture.

A well-set workspace can not only prevent back pain but also enhance productivity and make long hours at your desk more comfortable. [Check out this video](#) from Injury and Health Management Solutions (IHMS) to learn more about making simple adjustments to your office setup.

WEEKLY EMAIL #4 (DAYS 16-20): *Copy and paste the content below into your email software.*

STRONG BACK, STRONG FUTURE: SAFE LIFTING MECHANICS

Lift smart, stay safe. Lifting with poor body mechanics is one of the leading causes of back injuries. To protect your back follow these tips:

DO

- ✓ Always bend at your hips and knees, not your waist, when picking up an object. This position helps distribute the weight more evenly, preventing unnecessary strain on your spine.
- ✓ Keep the object close to your body as you lift—this reduces the leverage and makes the load feel lighter.
- ✓ Engaging your core muscles while lifting provides extra support for your lower back and helps stabilize your body.

DON'T

- Avoid twisting your torso when lifting, as this motion can put undue pressure on your spine.
- If the object is too heavy or awkward to lift on your own, don't. Ask for help or use lifting equipment like a dolly or a lifting aid.

Safe lifting isn't just a rule for the workplace—it's a habit you should practice daily to avoid injury. [This video](#) from Injury and Health Management Solutions (IHMS) will guide you through proper lifting techniques, helping you stay safe and pain-free.

STRONG BACK, STRONG FUTURE: LOW BACK: WHEN TO SEEK PROFESSIONAL CARE

Most back pain improves with time and self-care, but there are certain signs that should not be ignored. If your pain lasts more than a few weeks, radiates down your legs, causes numbness or tingling, or significantly affects your ability to carry out daily activities, it's important to seek professional care. Early intervention can help prevent more serious, long-term problems. Pay attention to your body—it knows when something isn't right. The sooner you address any concerning symptoms, the sooner you can get on the path to recovery and avoid further complications.

[This video](#) from Injury and Health Management Solutions (IHMS) provides valuable information on when to seek care and how to recognize the signs that indicate it's time to consult a healthcare provider about your back pain.

Some of the services that may be available to you include:

- **Chiropractic care:** Treats and prevents neuromusculoskeletal disorders.
- **Physical therapy:** Relieves pain of an acute condition and prevents disability following disease, injury, or loss of body part. A physical therapist can create a personalized care plan.
- **Acupuncture:** Involves inserting fine needles at specific body points to relieve pain and is used to manage musculoskeletal pain and improve overall function. Be sure to confirm your plan benefits for acupuncture coverage.

Check out our blog on [how to understand your outline of coverage](#) to determine if you will have out-of-pocket costs for these services.

CAMPAIGN ENHANCEMENTS

This is a list of optional ideas to help your participants be successful and enhance their experience.

Week	Topic	Ideas to bring the content to life
Days 1-5	Low back stretching and strengthening exercises	Purchase necessary equipment: bands, stability ball, dumbbell and exercise mats that allow employees to practice the exercises. Set up an office space with equipment listed above so employees can take a movement break during their workday.
Days 6-10	Challenge Tracker & Exercise Plan	Orient staff to the challenge tracker during the opening minutes of a staff meeting. Play a few minutes of the stretching exercises so employees can try them out before jumping into the meeting agenda. OR Print the challenge tracker and leave as a desk drop for onsite employees.
Days 11-15	Office Workstation Set Up	Reach out to your Health & Wellness consultant to see which vendors are available to come onsite to do ergonomic assessments at your location. Share a calendar invite with your team(s) as a reminder to take a break from sitting.
Days 16-20	Safe Lifting Mechanics	Hire a safety or fitness expert to provide a safe lifting technique demonstration for staff. Injury & Health Management Solutions, Inc. is an example of a local vendor that has expertise in this area. Purchase safe lifting posters that could be posted in break rooms or other areas where staff may be exercising
Days 21-25	When to Seek Professional Care	Remind employees that seeing a specialist may require additional out-of-pocket costs, and encourage them to check their plan's outline of coverage in the Blue Cross VT Member Resource Center for more details on these services or call Blue Cross VT customer service using the number on the back of their ID card.

During the final days of the challenge remind participants to complete their tracker and send it to you for points.