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**TEXAS BACK INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES “NINE FOR YOUR SPINE” FOR NATIONAL
SPINE HEALTH DAY – OCTOBER 16**

Nine Exercises to Build and Maintain a Healthy Spine

PLANO, Texas (October 13, 2008) – In an effort to educate people about spine health, Texas Back Institute shares “Nine for Your Spine.” The release of these nine easy exercises coincides with National Spine Health Day, October 16, 2008.

National Spine Health Day was established to bring attention to and understanding about exercise as the most effective means of reducing the prevalence and severity of back pain. While the occurrence of back pain is widespread, the underlying causes are not. The best prevention for back pain is simple: exercise.

“Most people don’t realize how important their spine is to their overall health,” said Dr. Scott Blumenthal, a board-certified orthopedic spine surgeon who specializes in artificial disc surgery and sports-related injuries at Texas Back Institute. “Back pain is the second most common reason for visits to the doctor’s office, outnumbered only by upper respiratory infections.”

In recognition of National Spine Health Day, Texas Back Institute shares “Nine for Your Spine,” exercise tips to build and maintain a healthy spine:

1. “Draw in” exercise
Lie on your back with knees bent. Imagine buttoning very tight pants. Slowly “draw in” the lower abdominals, just below the navel, and hold for 10 seconds. Keep the back as relaxed as possible, and avoid flattening or arching the back. This exercise focuses on strengthening the lumbar stabilizer muscles. Can be performed in any neutral spine position (sitting, standing, walking, while working out, etc.).
2. Press-up
Lie on the floor on your stomach, and place your hands in a push-up position. Slowly push up with arms and allow the back to naturally bend as if doing a standing back bend. Try to relax the lower back as much as possible, and keep hips on floor. Perform 10 repetitions with no hold.
3. Pretzel stretch
Lie on your back with knees bent; place opposite ankle on opposite knee. Reach and pull bottom thigh up toward the chest until you have a mild to moderate stretch. Perform two or three stretches on each leg, holding each stretch for 30 seconds.
4. Prone leg raises
Lie on stomach with head and neck in comfortable position (such as forehead on

rolled towel). Slowly lift leg from hip as high as comfortable and without rotating hip off floor. Alternate legs for five to 15 reps (depending on your fitness level), and perform to one to two sets.

5. Bridges

Lie on your back with knees bent and feet spread shoulder-width apart. Slowly lift hips off floor until thighs and trunk are in straight alignment, then slowly return to beginning position. Perform five to 15 reps in one to two sets (depending on your fitness level).

6. Chin tucks

Sit as upright as possible. Slowly tuck the chin by pulling your head straight back over the shoulders without tilting head down or up. Perform 10 reps without hold.

7. Neck stretches (side bend and rotation)

Tilt head slowly to the side, with your ear directly over your shoulder. Hold 30 seconds, then relax and proceed to other side for one to two reps on each side. Next, turn head (as if turning head side to side as if to say “no”). Hold chin inline with shoulder 30 seconds with one to two reps each side.

8. Shoulder rolls

Roll shoulders backward in a circle for 30 seconds. Start with little circles, and progressively make them bigger.

9. Scapular squeeze or rows

Stand as upright as possible, with elbows bent and arms relaxed by side. Squeeze shoulder blades together and hold 10 seconds. Perform five to 10 reps.

Alternatively, you can do rowing exercises with a resistive band or weight machine.

About Texas Back Institute

Texas Back Institute, one of the largest freestanding spine specialty clinics in the United States, was established in 1978 and provides comprehensive medical care for back and neck pain. Texas Back Institute is a back care leader specializing in spinal arthroplasty, minimally invasive spine surgery, spinal deformation and spinal oncology care. As an academic health care organization, Texas Back Institute has trained hundreds of physicians, scientists and allied health professionals. Its research institution employs state-of-the-art technology and is involved in the most clinical trials, including artificial discs. Texas Back Institute’s professional staff includes board-certified spine surgeons, general surgeons, internists, chiropractors, physiatrists, pain specialists, exercise physiologists, and a team of physical and occupational therapists. Texas Back Institute’s main clinic is in Plano, with locations in Denton, Fort Worth, Greenville, McKinney, Rockwall, Trophy Club and Wichita Falls, Texas, as well as Phoenix, Arizona. For more information, visit www.texasback.com.