



**Dave's
NMT & Fitness**

Cat & Cow

Movement Therapy

These instructions are designed to be a reminder for those who have already been taught the exercise by a qualified instructor. If you have not been previously taught and the exercise produces any undesirable effects, stop immediately and consult a professional.

This is designed as a movement therapy as opposed to a stretch. The movements should flow one to the other, without significant pause in any position. The entire exercise should be kept within a pain free range of motion.

The exercise is performed in a position similar to a baby crawling with the hands knees and toes on the floor. The hands are directly under the shoulders and the knees directly under the hips. The arms remain fully extended throughout.

- 1) Inhale slowly, raise the back, drop the head, and tuck the pelvis all simultaneously until resistance is encountered. This creates an arched spine, which mimics a scared cat.
- 2) Exhale slowly, lower the back, raise the head, and point the buttock, simultaneously, until resistance is felt. This creates a slumped posture, which mimics a cow.
- 3) Repeat steps one and two without significant pause until the movement feels smooth for eight to ten repetitions.
- 4) Pause in the cow posture and inhale without moving.
- 5) Resume the movements, this time exhaling while raising the back and inhaling while lowering the back.
- 6) Repeat the procedure until the movement feels smooth for another eight to ten repetitions.

The affect of this exercise is to facilitate all of the neurological pathways, which control flexion, and extension of the spine. An increase in pain free and resistance free range of motion is usually noticeable by the end of the exercise.

This exercise is recommended one or two times per day for ongoing spinal health, however, it may be used more frequently in the case of recurrent tension patterns.