



**Free Exercise:
THE ANGRY CAT
April 2008**

THE ANGRY CAT: This exercise will mobilize your spine in flexion and extension, make your spine looser and more integrated.

Anatomy: The spine (vertebral column) extends from the skull to the pelvis and is made of 33 vertebrae: 7 cervical, 12 thoracic, 5 lumbar, 1 sacrum (made of 5 fused vertebrae) and 1 tailbone (made of 4 fused vertebrae). Movements are absorbed by the intervertebral discs that are located between most vertebrae and act as cushions to protect the spine and nerves.

Role: To protect the spinal cord and nerve roots, to provide structural support to the rest of your skeletal system. The spine is a base for the attachment of your ligaments, tendons and muscles. It allows for the exchange of nutrients, minerals and fluids to the bones and the many tissues of the body.

Position: Quadruped = knee underneath your hip joints, hands underneath your shoulders. Find Neutral Pelvis (sitting bones parallel to the floor). Start in a flat back position.

Exercise: Soften your elbows and relax your shoulders away from your ears. On your next exhale, round your spine towards the ceiling like an angry cat, inhale and bring your spine back to the start position. Repeat this movement slowly a few more times but pay attention to the movement of your vertebrae. Now, try the next repetitions by articulating one vertebra at a time, starting from your tailbone.

Note: Keep your elbows soft and your shoulders away from your ears at all time. Do not force, especially from your chest. Allow the movement to travel up and down your spine with fluidity. Excellent exercise for pregnancy (as shown in pictures).

