1. Avoid staying seated for extended times. If possible, try to take a 2-3 minute break every 60 minutes to move, stretch, get up from your chair, etc.

2. Check your posture at the computer. Ask yourself if you have retracted shoulder blades with belly button pulled to the spine.

3. Focus on stretching every day, not just when you feel tight.

4. Focus on strengthening key muscles 2-3 times per week.

5. Complete non-impact exercise such as aquatic therapy or biking or lower impact modalities such as walking 3-5 times per week for 30-60 minutes in duration.

6. Work to maintain optimal weight relative to your height to reduce strain on your back.

STRETCHES:
Stretch every day! Hold each stretch to mild discomfort and for ~10-20 seconds. Repeat each stretch up to 3 times daily.

*Note, this is a hip swing exercise v. a static stretch. Keep stance leg heel down, swing your leg like a pendulum across your body and back out.
STRENGTH TRAINING
Complete strength training exercises 2-3 x per week. Complete all exercises listed for at least 8-12 repetitions per exercise/side. Repeat all exercises 2-3 x a session.

SIDE PLANKS
Start with your arm out and slowly raise your hips off the ground. Hold as long as you can. Work up to 30-60 seconds in duration. Switch sides and repeat.

BRIDGING
Draw belly button to spine; lift pelvic girdle off the floor; squeeze glutes (butt) and hold for 3-5 seconds. Lower.

OPPOSITE ARM AND LEG RAISE
Start on your hands and knees. Draw your belly button to your spine. Next, raise your left arm and right leg simultaneously. Hold for 3-5 seconds. Lower slowly. Repeat with the opposite combination. Move slowly! If you cannot do a simultaneous arm and leg raise, start only with lifting one arm and holding or lifting one leg and holding that position. Then, work your way up to the opposite arm/leg simultaneous lift pattern.

PLANKS
Start on your forearms and toes. Draw your belly button to your spine, keeping your back flat. Hold this position for as long as you can. Work up to 30-60 seconds in duration. Repeat.

SIDE PLANKS
Start with your arm out and slowly raise your hips off the ground. Hold as long as you can. Work up to 30-60 seconds in duration. Switch sides and repeat.

LEG LOCK BRIDGE
Complete bridging above. Then, pull one leg to chest without allowing your pelvic girdle to sag. Hold for 3-5 seconds. Lower. Switch to other side.