

Stretching

Here are the basic stretches. Your physiotherapist can modify the exercises for you if the positions are uncomfortable. Try to hold each stretch for at least 30 seconds and repeat twice daily. If balance is difficult in the standing postures, please hold onto a stable surface or the wall.

Hip flexors

1) Whilst standing, bend one knee to take your heel to your bottom. Hold your foot with your hand or a scarf if you cannot reach. Your knees should stay together. Be careful not to arch your back.



Gluteal stretches

Lying on your back with your knees bent, cross one foot onto the opposite knee. Putting your hands behind the leg on the floor, pull your thigh towards you. Both feet should now be off the ground. Use a scarf to assist you if you cannot reach with your hands.

Adductor stretch

Stand facing forwards with your feet apart, bend one leg and lean to that side. You should feel the stretch on the inner thigh of the straight leg.



Core Exercises

Transversus abdominus (TrA)

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Rock your pelvis back and forth to flatten your back against the floor and then arch your back to create space between your back and the floor (keeping your bottom on the floor). Find the mid point between these two movements. This is your “neutral spine” and should be the start position of your back for all core exercises. Place your fingertips on your hip bones at the front and move them down and in 1 inch. Take a normal breath in and on the breath out contract your lower tummy. It is important that you do not hold your breath or brace yourself. Hold the contraction for 5 seconds, continuing to breathe in and out.



This exercise is the basis for all the core exercises. Repeat each movement 10-15 times. Core exercises should be done at least 3 times per week.

Hip twist

Start in the neutral spine (as above). Breathe in to prepare. Breathe out as you take one knee out to the side. Breathe in as you return to rest position. Aim to keep your back in the neutral position and do not allow your hip to drop as you move the leg. Maintain contraction of the TrA muscle.



Clam

Lie on your side with your top leg on top of the bottom leg. Your knees should be flexed to 90°, hips 45°. Exhale as you open your knees. Inhale to lower back down. Your spine should remain in the neutral spine position and the movement restricted to the lower half of your body only. Contract the TrA throughout the movement.



4-point kneel with leg/arm extension

Start on your hands and knees. Begin by taking one leg at a time out to straighten the hip and knee. Repeat on the other side. The aim is to keep your back as level as possible throughout the movement. Progress by adding the opposite arm movement to the leg movement. Imagine you have a glass of water on the small of your back.



Plank

Place your forearms on the ground with your elbows directly underneath the shoulders. Keeping your knees straight, come up onto your toes. Goal - hold the position for one minute. Avoid the back dropping! Progression - rise up onto the hands.



Side plank

Lie on your side with your knees straight. Rest your upper body on your forearm. Raise your hips to lift off the ground. Goal - hold for one minute.

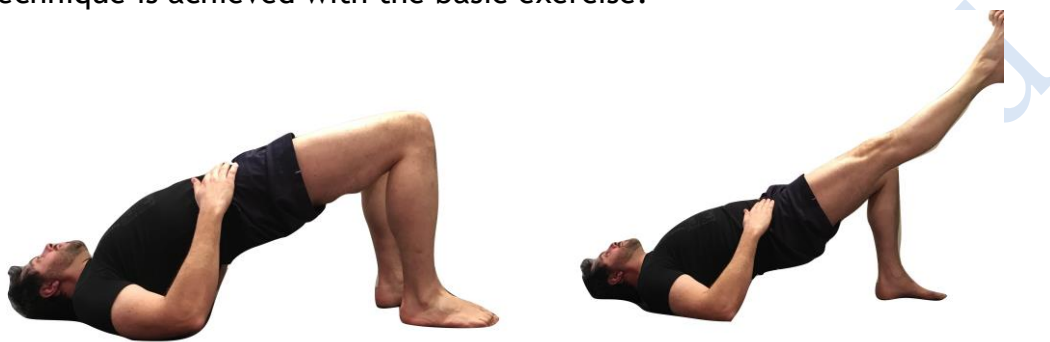
Plank variations - add an unstable surface, lift one leg, rotate.

Strength/Control/Function

Repeat each exercise 10 times. Try to do each exercise twice per day.

Bridging

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Rest your arms by your sides or on your abdominal muscles. Push through your heels to lift your bottom. This exercise can be progressed by lifting one foot off the floor to straighten the knee after 2 weeks - ONLY if good technique is achieved with the basic exercise.



Straight leg raise

Lie on your back. Straighten one leg. Pull your toes towards you and lift the leg a few inches from the floor. Hold for 5-10 seconds.



Side-lying abduction

Lie on your side with the bottom leg bent for stability. Keeping the top leg straight, lift it up towards the ceiling and back down again.



The following exercises are more advanced and your Physiotherapist should check your technique before you progress to this level.

Squats

Start with your feet hip width apart. Your toes should be facing forwards and be in front of the knee. Move as if you are going to sit down (move a few inches only). Return to the start position.

These can be progressed in many ways. For the simplest version use the wall to lean on for support. Progress the range of movement of the squat (i.e. go down deeper). Progress by adding free weights or squatting on an unstable surface.



Single leg squats

Stand on one leg. Keeping your knee behind the line of your toes, move as if you are going to sit down (move a few inches only). Return to the start position.



Lunges

Take a stance position. With both knees bent, take your midline down a few inches towards the floor. Ensure good alignment is maintained. Return to the start position.



These can be progressed by adding movement, e.g. stepping forwards/backwards and adding free weights.