

Core Strengthening

Vertical Leg Crunch

Lie on the floor and extend the legs straight up with knees crossed. Place your hands behind the head for support, but avoid pulling on the neck. Contract the abs to lift the shoulder blades off the floor, as though reaching your chest towards your feet. Keep the legs in a fixed position and imagine bringing your belly button towards your spine at the top of the movement. Return to starting position slowly and repeat for 1-3 sets of 12-16 reps.



Double-leg abdominal press

Lie on your back with your knees bent (A). Maintain neutral back and hip position. Tighten your abdominal muscles. Raise your legs off the floor, one at a time, so that your knees and hips are bent at 90-degree angles. Push your hands against your knees while using your abdominal muscles to pull your knees toward your hands (B). Press and hold for three deep breaths. Repeat for 3 sets of 10 reps.



Trunk Rotations

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your back in a neutral position. Tighten your abdominal muscles. Keeping your shoulders on the floor, let your knees fall slowly to the left (A). Go as far as comfortable for a stretch, but not pain. Hold for three deep breaths. Return to the start position. Repeat 3 sets of 7 reps (B).



Modified Plank

Position yourself resting on your forearms and your knees (For increased difficulty raise your knees). Align your head and neck with your back, and place your shoulders directly above your elbows. Tighten your abdominal muscles. Create resistance by pressing your elbows and your knees toward one another without moving them from their positions on the floor. Take 10 deep breaths then return to the start position. Repeat for 3 sets of 5 reps.



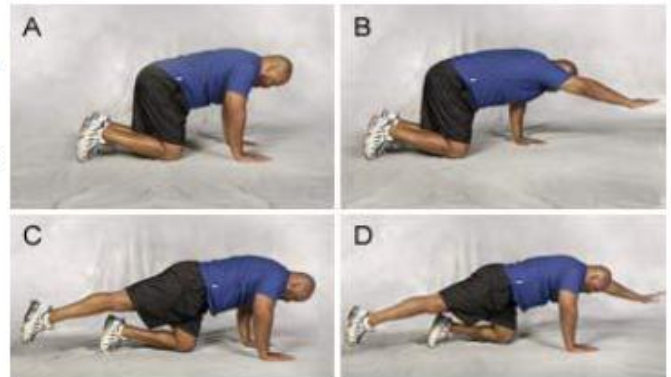
Side Plank

Begin in a lateral position on your left forearm with your left shoulder directly above your left elbow, keeping your shoulders, hips and knees in alignment (A). Rest your right arm along the side of your body. Tighten your abdominal muscles. Hold for 10 deep breaths. Repeat on your right side. For added challenge, balance on your left hand. Raise your hips off the floor and extend your right hand toward the ceiling (B). Hold for 10 deep breaths. Repeat on your right side. Repeat for 3 sets of 5 reps.



Quadrupeds (Aquamans)

Start on all fours with your hands directly below your shoulders, and align your head and neck with your back (A). Tighten your abdominal muscles. Raise your right arm off the floor and reach ahead (B). Hold for 3 deep breaths. Lower your right arm and repeat with your left arm. Raise your right leg off the floor (C). Tighten your trunk muscles for balance. Hold for 3 deep breaths. Lower your right leg and repeat with your left leg. For added challenge, raise your left arm and your right leg at the same time (D). Repeat with your right arm and left leg. 3 sets of 10.



Supermans

Lie on your stomach with a rolled towel or a small pillow under your hips to support your back (Step 1). Tighten your abdominal muscles. Raise both arms and both legs off the floor (6 inches) (Step 2). Hold for 5 deep breaths. Repeat 3 sets of 7 reps.

Step 1



Step 2



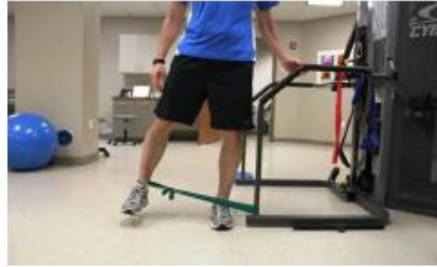
Bridge

Lie on your back with your knees bent (A). Keep your back in a neutral position, not arched and not pressed into the floor. Avoid tilting your hips. Tighten your abdominal muscles. Raise your hips off the floor until your hips are aligned with your knees and shoulders (B). Hold for 3 deep breaths. Repeat for 3 sets of 10.



Standing Hip Abductor

Anchor a resistance theraband to a stable object. Tie and loop the other end around your right foot so the band crosses in front of you. Standing on a box or elevated object (not shown), with your left leg slightly behind you, keep your right leg straight and extend it out to the side. Hold for 2-3 seconds, then release it back down slowly. Repeat for 3 sets of 15 reps then repeat on the other leg.



Adductor ball squeeze

Begin this exercise lying in the position demonstrated with a rolled towel or ball between your knees. Slowly squeeze the ball between your knees tightening your inner thigh muscles (adductors). Hold for 5 seconds and repeat for 3 sets of 7 reps as hard as possible pain free.



Hip External Rotation (Clam-shells)

Lie on your side with your legs stacked one on top of the other, and your knees bend forward about 45 degrees. Squeeze your buttocks and hold as you lift the top knee up, keeping your feet stacked. Your legs should look like an open clamshell. Inhale as you close your legs. Repeat this 3 sets of 15 reps, keeping your pelvis steady and facing forward throughout the movement.



Monster Walks (Side steps)

Begin this exercise in a standing position with legs at shoulder width in a slightly flexed position with a theraband wrapped securely around both ankles. Take medium to large steps to the side without allowing any slack in the band. Repeat 3 sets of 25 reps.



Marching Bridge

Begin on your back with feet about 12 inches from your buttocks and hands by your sides with palms up. Press your heels into the ground and lift your pelvis up until your knees, pelvis, and shoulders form a straight line. Hold your bridge while you lift your right knee toward your chest, until your hip is at 90 degrees (See image). Return the heel to the floor and lift the left knee. Maintain position - Do not let your pelvis drop or your back overarch while lifting and lowering your knees. This completes one rep. Do 2 sets of 6-10 reps.



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