

Posture Correction

Getting Started

- 1) Read each exercise completely before practicing.
- 2) Always listen to the body. If it feels like too much, ease into the exercise. The best way to help the body is to work with it DO NOT force it.
- 3) Proper posture is more important than the number of number of times you do the motion (reps) or how far the body can stretch.
- 4) Use modifications to change the difficulty level of the exercise when needed. NEVER overdo the exercise.
- 5) Refer to images to help with the understanding of posture and movements.

(D)efinitions:

- 1) A.S.I.S.: (A)nterior (S)uperior (I)liac (S)pine
-bony prominences on top and to the front of the pelvis
-pelvic crest
- 2) Bolster: a long pillow or cushion
-for these exercises pillows, blankets, or towels can be used.
- 3) Bolster the ribs: bolster (D2) the head and shoulders til the ribs rest down onto the floor.
- 4) Lateral Malleolus: head of the bone that sticks out on the outside of the ankle joint.
- 5) Neutral pelvis: ASIS (D1) and the pubic symphysis are in vertical alignment
- 6) Reps: repeated motions; for our purpose, one to twenty times and as the body or time allows with proper body positioning.



BODY NEUTRAL

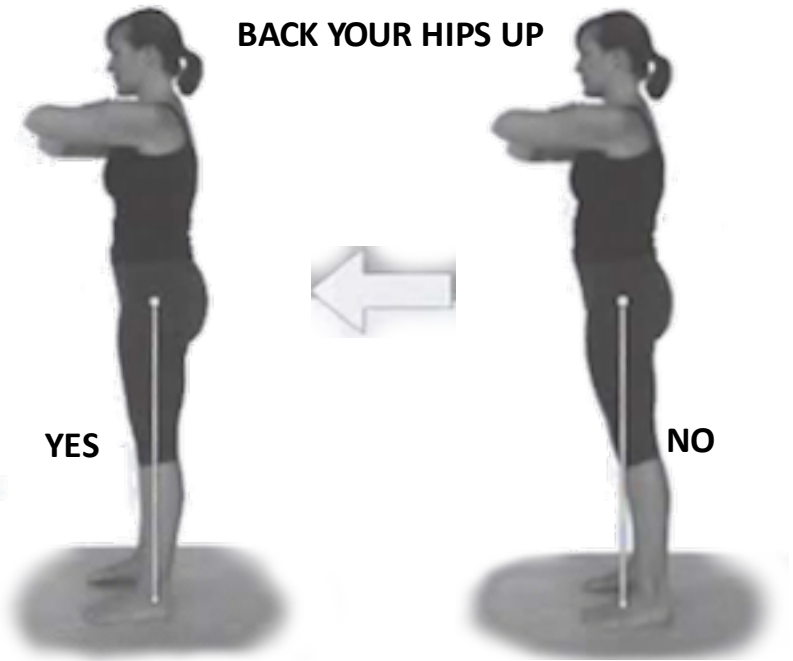
FEET PELVIS-WIDTH APART

*Align the center of the front of the ankles with the A.S.I.S. (D1).



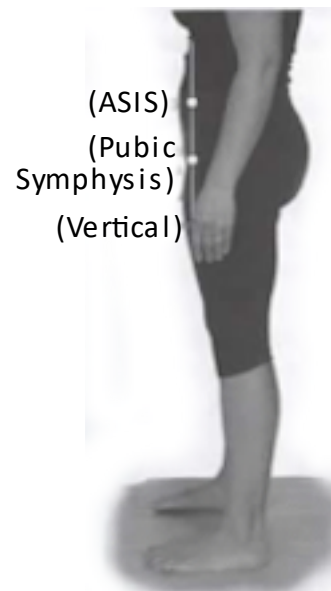
BODY NEUTRAL

BACK YOUR HIPS UP



*Move the hips back directly over the knees and ankles. Align the leg from the center of the hip joint to the midpoint of the knee and the lateral malleolus (D4).

NEUTRAL PELVIS

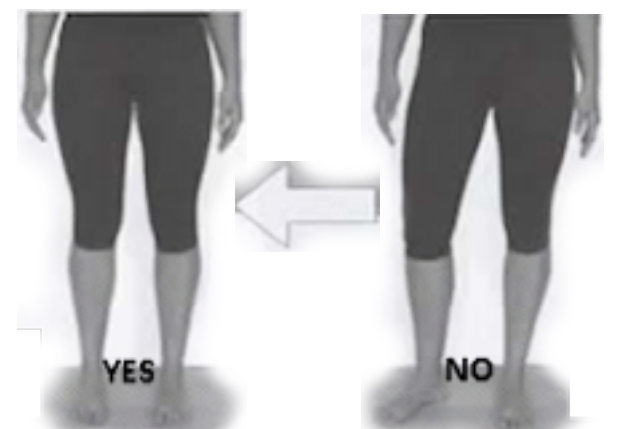


*Align the ASIS (D1) and the pubic symphysis vertically.

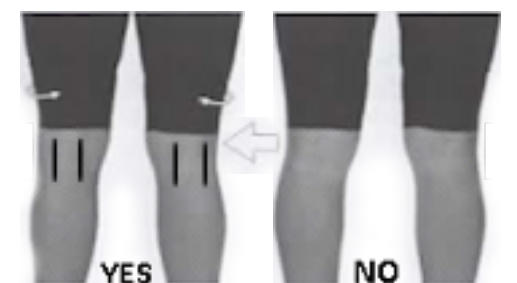
*Straining to attain a neutral pelvis is an indication of incorrect behavior patterns in need of change. It is important to use corrective postures to retrain the body into proper position.

NEUTRAL FEMURS

*Feet straight ahead, aligning the lateral malleolus (D4) behind the pinkie toe.



*Standing with a mirror behind the body, turn the thighbones (D2) away from each other until the four lines down the back of both knees line up as shown.



BODY NEUTRAL

DROP YOUR RIBS



*Shift the ribcage down and back until the bottom front ribs are aligned vertically with the ASIS (D1) and the pubic symphysis.



RELEASE YOUR DIAPHRAGM

*Placing both hands on the upper abdomen and allowing the entire belly to relax, pay special attention to the sensation of the diaphragm releasing.

*While expanding the abdomen outward, sense and feel the motion with the hands.

*Once the diaphragm releases, try relaxing it again, there is normally residual tension that can be further released.

*Practice relaxing the diaphragm throughout the day.

*Advanced diaphragm release; start on hands and knees with a flat back, relax the belly to the floor.

SMALL MOBILIZING EXERCISES

FLOOR ANGELS

*Lying face-up, reach arms out to the side, keeping the palms facing up and the elbows lifting toward the ceiling.

*Bolster the ribs (D3), keeping the backs of hands to the floor, and elbows slightly bent.

*Once the chest can handle this stretch, slowly move arms toward head, lifting elbows away from floor while keeping thumbs on the floor.

*Keep the ribs down and stable.

(Continued in the next column)

SMALL MOBILIZING EXERCISES

FLOOR ANGELS (continued)

*Make the "snow angel" motion. Extend the arms above the head, only as far as remaining able to keep the ribs and thumbs on the floor.



*Do as many reps (D6) as the body permits.

*Advanced Modification; remove the bolster, but only if ribs stay down.

WINDMILL STRETCH

*Lying faceup, bring the left knee up toward chest and then roll onto the right side (DO NOT spinal twist, but roll) resting the right knee on the ground, left over right.

*DO NOT thrust the ribs.

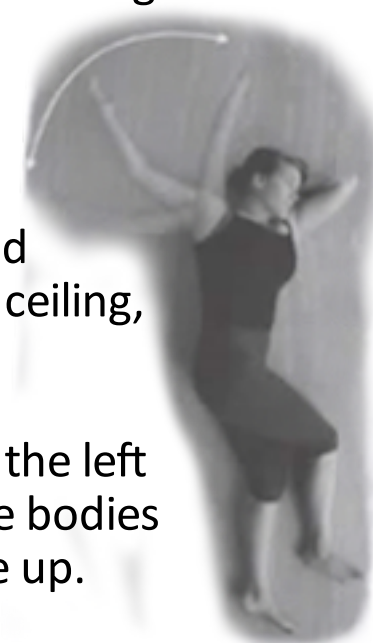
*Extend the left hand, arm, and shoulder blade up toward the ceiling, away from the spine.

*Slowly drop the arm open to the left being careful not to exceed the bodies tolerance or thrust the ribcage up.

*Once finding the body's limit, imagine the arm is on the face of a clock. Keep the palm facing the ceiling and SLOWLY move the arm back and forth between twelve and six o'clock.

*Do as many reps (D6) as the body permits continuously reaching the elbow away from torso and keeping the ribs to the floor.

*Repeat on the right side.



DOORWAY WALKTHROUGH

*Reach the arms up until touching the wall above the door with flat palms, dropping the ribs into a neutral position.

*Advanced Modification1; keeping the arms straight, step forward to increase the stretch, paying attention to drop the ribs.

SMALL MOBILIZING EXERCISES

DOORWAY WALKTHROUGH (continued)

*Advanced Modification 2; elbows forward with pinky side of hand against doorway, paying attention to drop the ribs.



*Advanced Modification 3; loop the fingers around an edge and lower body towards the floor. Do most of the work with the legs but some of work with the arms.

*Vertically challenged modification 1; use a lower doorway or chin-up bar repeating same stretches and modifications.

*Vertically challenged modification 2; do one arm at a time, left arm on the left side of the doorway and right arm on the right side.

SMALL STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

LOG PULLOVER

*Lie on the floor, face up, with legs extended and ribs down on the floor.



*Bolster the ribs (D3) if needed.

*Grip the ends of a log and squeeze elbows towards each other (difficulty bringing elbows in, indicates tight shoulders).



*Keeping the ribs down, lower the log overhead only going as far as possible without lifting the ribs up toward the ceiling, then return the log to the starting position.

*Do as many reps (D6) as the body permits.

* Advanced Modification; same as before, without a bolster, this exercise becomes an abdominal workout.

SMALL STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

INTERCOSTAL ACTIVATION

*Seated or standing, tie a resistance band or pair of tights firmly around the torso just beneath the chest muscles or breast at the height of a bra strap or heart rate monitor.



*Be sure to drop the ribs.

*Inhale deeply, expanding the ribcage into the band until feeling the resistance from the elastic pushing on the ribs.

*Tighten the band if there is no tension in the ribs at the end of the inhale.

*Exhale, being aware of how the ribcage can pull away from the ring of elastic and closer to an imaginary vertical pole running up through the center of the body.

*Repeat, using each exhale to pull the ribs in and downward.

*Once the motor skill of this exercise is understood, it can be done without the tactile assistance of the band.

FREE YOUR WAIST

RIB SLIDE ON WALL

*Stand against a wall with feet spread a bit wider than pelvis width. Align the upper body with the feet a few inches from the wall. Place the buttocks and mid-back on the wall, ribs DOWN.

*Slide the upperbody to the right and left creating a horizontal movement that requires the muscles between the ribs and pelvis to loosen up.



(Continued on the next page)

FREE YOUR WAIST

RIB SLIDE ON WALL (continued)

*Shoulders and ribcage stay level as they move to the right and left of the pelvis.

*Eventually this exercise can be done without the wall.

WALL CRESCENT

*Stand with back against a wall. Place the buttocks, ribs, and the back of the head against the wall with heels of the feet a few inches from the wall.

*Reach arms over head until hands touch the wall above.

*The priority is keeping the legs straight, pelvis neutral and ribs down. If head or hands do not touch the wall, keep practicing and over time they will become closer.

*Do a side bend, without any twisting or thrusting, using the wall as a reference, to maintain proper posture.

*Repeat on the other side.

*Do as many reps (D6) as the body permits.



FLOOR CRESCENT

*Lying face up, bolster the ribs (D3), interlacing the fingers, reach the arms overhead until wrists touch the ground.

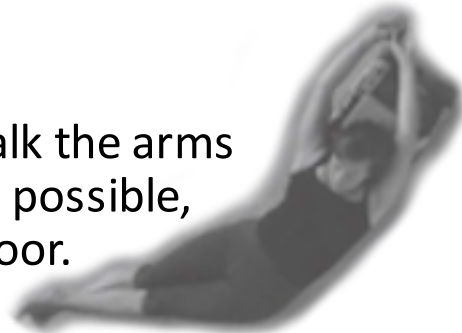
*Keeping the ribs down, walk the arms and legs to the left as far as possible, keep all four limbs on the floor.

*If keeping the arms on the ground cause the ribs to pop up (tight shoulders), modify by allowing the arms to come up as necessary.

*For tight waist (hip) muscles, cross the right ankle over the left to increase the stretch.

*Practice the intercostal activation breathing while holding this stretch for a minute or more.

*Repeat on the other side.



SEATED SPINAL TWIST

*Sit in a chair with a neutral pelvis and ribs down.

*Without straining, elevating the ribs, or tucking the pelvis, slowly turn to the right and left.

*Move to the edge of the range of motion. Pay attention to alignment while increasing the stretch.

*After a few reps of twisting, hold the twist while doing the active intercostal exhale for five breaths (keeping the ribs down).

*Repeat on the other side.

*Complete the circuit with a few twists back and forth.



BOLSTERED SPINAL TWIST

*Lying face-up bolster the ribs (D3).

*After bolstering, scoot the pelvis an inch or two to the left, then bring the left knee up so that it stacks over the hip, and rotate the pelvis to the right lowering the left knee to the right-side of the body, stopping as soon as the ribs start to lift-up.

*Twist only as far as the ribs remain stable, DO NOT force it.

*If the pelvis barely moves and the knee is raised off the floor, bolster the knee while crossing it over so it can rest on them. This will reduce the load to the spine and keep these muscles from tensing unnecessarily.

*Repeat on the opposite side.



FREE YOUR WAIST

CLICK-CLACK

* Until the pelvis opens up sit on a bolster (D2) making the motion easier to do.

* Tuck and untuck the pelvis as best as possible.*After achieving some mobility, bend the knees until feet are flat on the ground.

*Holding the shins just below the knees, lean back until arms are straight with the ribs down.

*Keep the body in this position throughout this exercise with straight arms, ribs and feet down.



*Without changing arm length, tilt the pelvis back and forward. Be attentive of the tendency to lift the chest and tense the muscles of the back. Focus on keeping the arms straight and the ribs down while articulating only the pelvis.



*Practice steering the motion of the pelvis with the feet.

*Keeping the feet firmly planted, engage the muscles to slide the feet away from the body (do not let the feet move). Engaging these muscles will roll the upper part of the pelvis back, tucking the pelvis. This will generate a backwards (posterior) tilt to the pelvis.



*To create a forward (anterior) tilt to the pelvis, do the opposite motion; anchor the feet and engage the muscles to pull the feet towards the body (do not let the feet move). This motion will rotate the top of the pelvis forward.

DOORJAMB PULL-UP

*Stand in a doorway, grasping the side of the doorway around shoulder height (changing the height of the grasp to work the muscle differently).

*Keeping the body straight (this strengthens and requires the core muscles), feet together against the wall, the elbow pointing down to the floor and even with the body not behind. Lower the body away from the doorway and pull back up. Do not fully extend the arms.

*Repeat on the other side.

*Do as many reps (D6) as the body permits.

*Modified doorjam pull-up; space the feet away from the wall lowers the intensity. Once the body is strengthened move the feet closer to the wall.



INNER THIGHS

WIDE SQUAT WITH SIT-BACK

*Start on the hands and knees while being mindful of the ribs and widen the knees broader than the pelvis.

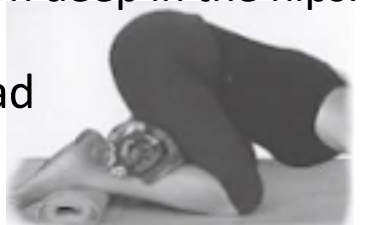
*Sit back toward the feet without tucking the pelvis.

*Once settled back as far as the pelvis

can go without tucking, gently shift the pelvis from side to side to find any tension deep in the hips.

*Modification 1; reducing the load on the body. For knees do this exercise on a soft surface (bed, mat, towel, etc..), place a bolster (D2) behind the knees to reduce flexion, and one under the ankles to prevent over extending ankles.

*Modification 2; change the width of the space between the knees changes the stretch.



INNER THIGHS

KNEE OUT TO THE SIDE

*Lying face down on the floor, slide the left knee along the floor until it's out to the side, keeping it bent.

*Beginner modification (for tight hips); if moving the thigh moves the pelvis, turn the pelvis so that it "faces" the knee, and see if it can move higher.

*Once the knee is as close to the head as the body currently permits, turn the pelvis back to the floor, increasing the stretch.

*Hang out in the most comfortable place between the knee up to the side and pelvis flat on the ground.



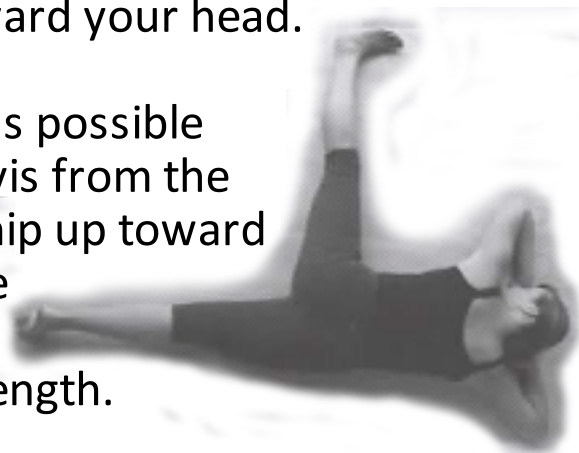
*Repeat this on the other side a few times back and forth, holding each side about a minute.

LEG OUT TO THE SIDE

*Start face down on the floor.

*Following the same instructions as "Knee Out to the Side" but with a straight leg, slide the leg along the floor up toward your head.

*Bring leg up as high as possible without lifting the pelvis from the floor or hiking either hip up toward your ribcage. Keep the right and left sides of your waist the same length.



*Advanced Modification; externally rotate the thighbone of the extended leg so the toes on that foot point more toward the ceiling and less toward the floor.

* Hang out in the most comfortable place between the leg up to the side and pelvis flat on the ground.

SUPINE SOLES TOGETHER

*Lying face up, bolster the ribs (D3), bend knees until the soles of the feet are touching, and drop the knees out to sides. If groin is over stretched, bolster the knees to reduce the stretch.

(Continued in the next column)

SUPINE SOLES TOGETHER (continued)

*Advanced Modification; remove some or all of the bolsters while keeping the body's posture and tolerance in mind.



SUPINE STACKED LEGS

*From the position of the "Supine Souls Together" exercise, cross the ankles to place one ankle on top of the opposite shin.

*Let both knees drop toward the floor, bolstering as necessary, same as before.



*Advanced Modification; remove some or all of the bolsters keeping the body's posture and tolerance in mind.

FRONT OF THE THIGH

KNEECAP RELEASE

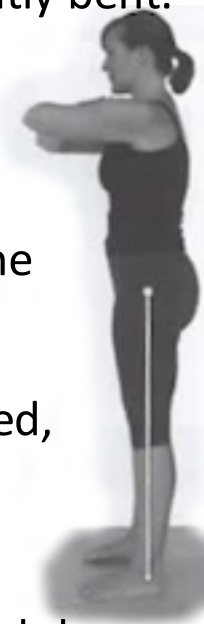
*Stand in "Body Neutral" (pages 1&2) let your kneecaps drop down by relaxing the quadricep muscles.

*Beginner Modification 1; stand with weight supported against a wall resting the buttocks against the wall. If the quads aren't relaxing it's usually because the knees remain slightly bent.

*Beginner Modification 2; if the kneecaps are still not dropping, sit on the front edge of a chair, keeping the heels on the ground, fully straighten the legs out in front.

*Once the quad release is mastered, add it to the "Body Neutral" posture.

* If the quads engage and rotate the thighs, try engaging the deep hip rotators.



ILIACUS RELEASE

*Lying face up, bolster the ribs (D3) with knees bent.

*Bolster (D2) the lower half of the pelvis while making sure to leave space under the waistband.

(Continued on the next page)

FRONT OF THE THIGH

ILIACUS RELEASE

*Teeter totter the pelvis towards the head while lowering the waistband towards the floor.

*Allow gravity to create the motion for release Do Not work to rotate the pelvis.

*Hold this posture as long as desired remembering that even if the pelvis doesn't budge gravity is stretching the muscles.



PSOAS RELEASE

*Start by sitting on the floor with legs extended. Relax the muscles of the legs until the backs of the legs rest on the ground. The pelvis might need to be untucked to make this possible.

*After the thighs are down, start to recline stopping just before the the back of the legs lift away from the ground. At this angle, bolster (D2) the head and shoulders leaving space for the ribs to rest closer to the floor.



*Once the head and shoulders are bolstered, start relaxing the ribs to the floor. The point is not to get the ribcage to the floor by flexing muscles but to feel the tension in the muscles and the subconscious movement of the skeleton.

*As the psoas relaxes, the ribs will be able to move closer to the floor. Adjust the height or position of the bolster (D2) as the ribs relax down.

FEMORIS QUAD STRETCH

*Start face down. Place the bolster (D2) under the front of the pelvis while placing the ASIS (D1) higher on the bolster allowing the pubic bone to fall toward the floor. This will tilt the pelvis into place, making this next part of the exercise effective.

(Continued in the next column)

FEMORIS QUAD STRETCH (continued)

*Check the tension in the quads by bending the knee, bringing the ankle to the hand and without changing the position of the pubic bone to see if the ankle can be reached.



*Beginner Modification; if the foot cannot be reached, loop a strap around the ankle to stretch the muscle.

*Advanced modification; grab as close to the knee as possible on the shin and isolating the rectus femurs which prevents hyperextension of the ankle ligaments.

LUNGE MAKEOVER

*Start by sitting up on the knees preferably on something soft like carpet or a yoga mat.

*Step forward with the left leg shifting the weight of the body forward to the front foot and lowering the pelvis evenly toward the floor.

*Alternate legs, do as many reps (D6) as the body permits.

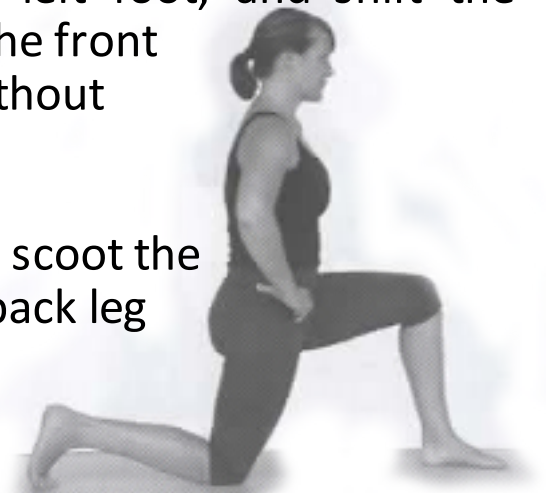
*Line up the pelvis so that it is in neutral position Keep the ASIS (D1) and pubic symphysis on a vertical plane.



*Step forward with the left foot, and shift the weight forward toward the front foot as far as possible without the pelvis tilting.

*Advanced Modification; scoot the front foot forward until back leg can extend no further.

*Alternate legs, do as many reps (D5) as the body permits.



FRONT OF THE THIGH

HIP SLIDE AND GLIDE

*Standing in front of a chair with feet a little wider than shoulder width, bend forward and resting the hands on the seat.

*Relax the spine down towards the floor without bending the arms.

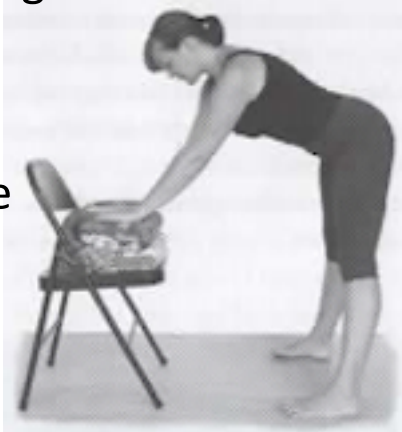
*After relaxing the spine, back the hips up until they are behind the heels.

*Shift the pelvis toward the right foot and then toward the left.

*Beginner Modification; if the back is rounding upward, place bolstering (D2) on the chair under the hands until the spine can relax down.

*Advanced Modification 1; Rotate the thighs into neutral, bringing the legs into better alignment to load the muscles that are affecting how the thighs and pelvis relate to each other while walking.

*Advanced Modification 2; place your butt against the wall to prevent adjusting the pelvis while sliding left and right.



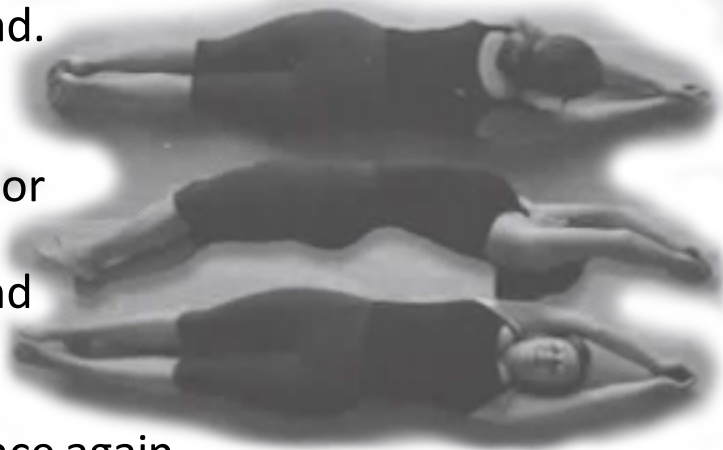
ABDOMINAL EXERCISES

ROLL OVER, ROLL BACK

*Lay face up with legs and arms stretched out straight overhead.

*Without lifting the head, arms, or legs, initiate a roll to the left and onto the stomach then roll to the left once again until ending face up. Eventually arms, legs, and head will move but this exercise is to try to get the core muscles to do the work (like a baby).

*Alternate side to side and do as many reps (D6) as the body permits.



ABDOMINAL EXERCISES

ROCKING CHAIR

*Start by lying face up with knees in toward the chest.

*Wrap your arms behind the knees holding thighs close to the body.

*Grab each arm's wrist or elbow as is possible.

*Lift head and shoulders off the ground making the body the shape of a rocking chair.

*Without straining, rock the body back and forth between the bottom of the ribs and just below the waistband.

Do not go any higher or lower than these points.

*Floor Modification; if, floor is especially hard, use a mat, towel, or blanket to create a softer surface for the spine.

*Beginner Modification; if unable to move at all (body wont curve and just stays in a flat line), continue with click-clack for a few more weeks then try again.

*Advanced Modification; same as before but adding a turning motion in small increments until spinning around in a full circle.

*Do the same thing in the opposite direction.

*ATTENTION!!! If there is a strain, or inability to breathe easily, STOP. Go back to normal Rocking Chair for a couple weeks before trying again.



SIT DIFFERENTLY

*Sit in different configurations throughout the day; cross-legged on a chair, on a bolster or pillow and spread legs in a wide V, directly on the floor, on knees, squat down, or whatever other configuration imagined and comfortable.

*It is okay if changing positions frequently or to bolster (D2) for support. The important thing is the change in the angles of the hips.

*Keep the ribs down and pelvis neutral (D5).

SIT BETTER

SIT NEAR THE FRONT OF CHAIR



*Scoot forward toward the front of the chair so to use the spine for support. This helps the pelvis.

UNTUCK PELVIS



*Sitting on the edge of the chair, roll the pelvis forward until achieving a neutral pelvis (D5).

*Advanced Modification; sit on a towel to increase pelvic motion

DE-HUMP UPPER BACK

*Keeping the ribs down, bring the head and eyes level to the horizon without lifting the chin or moving ribcage.

*This motion requires moving the vertebrae in the upper back.

*Modification; place buttocks, ribs, and shoulders against the wall then tuck the chin and do the first step.

SIT LESS

IDEAS TO REDUCE SITTING TIME

*Reduce unnecessary time spent in a chair.

*Consider eating some meals while standing at the counter.

*Lie on the floor or do stretches while watching t.v. at night.

*Kneel while folding laundry instead of sitting on the bed or couch.

*Consider standing for at least some of the journey on public transportation.

*Walk instead of driving or drive partway and walk the rest.

*Be creative and work in the neutral posture.

SIT LESS

STANDING (DYNAMIC) WORKSTATION

*Start with fifty minutes of standing out of an eight hour work day.

*It is best to spread out sitting and standing throughout the day not all at once.

WALKING

*Gradually increase your total walking distance to three to five miles most days, with longer walks of eight to ten miles a few times a week.

*Doing long or short walks are both good for the core muscles the important thing is to get the total mileage throughout the day.

*Blend errands and walking even if only ten or fifteen minutes.

*Take work phone calls and meetings outside for a stroll.

HORIZONTAL BAR

HANGING

*Find a horizontal plain you can hold on to, such as a bar or branch, that allows the feet to plant on the ground.

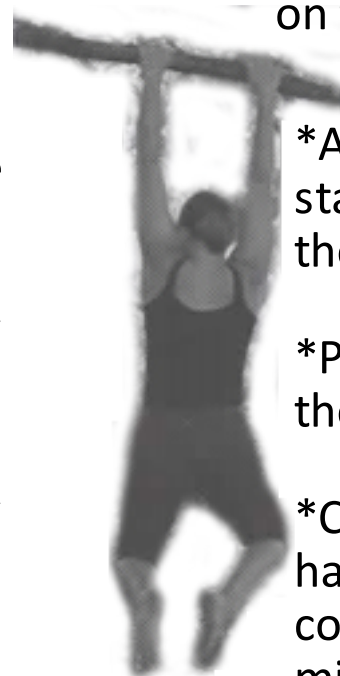
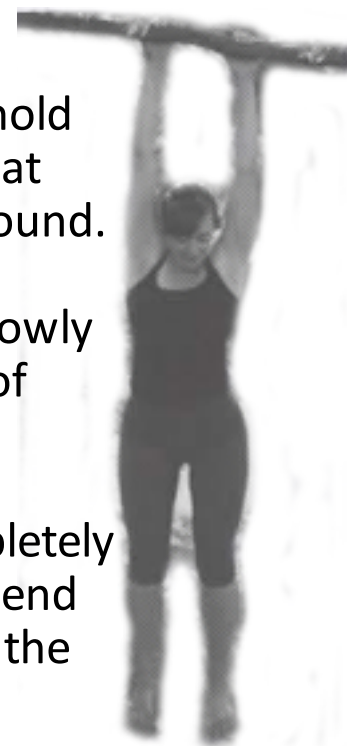
*Grasping the horizontal plain, slowly bend the knees drop the weight of the body away from the hands.

*DO NOT allow the arms to completely straighten. Maintaining a small bend on them will protect the elbow ligaments.

*After building the strength to stabilize the elbows, find a bar that the feet can hang off the ground.

*Pull the shoulders down towards the ground and keep the ribs down.

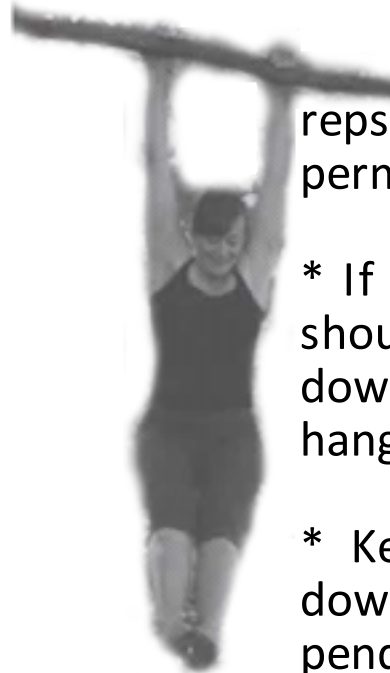
*Continue breathing as normal while hanging as described. feel the contraction of the muscles in the midsection.



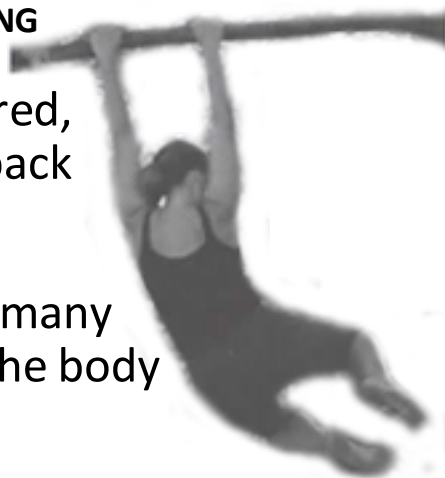
HORAZONTAL BAR

SWINGING

* Once hanging is mastered, start swinging the body back and forth.



*Do as many reps (D6) as the body permits.



* If the elbows over extend or the shoulders and ribs cannot be kept down, go back and practice hanging.

* Keeping the shoulders and ribs down swing legs left to right like a pendulum.

MONKEY BARS

* Begin by hanging and then swinging from one arm at a time to increase the strength in both arms. Be sure to stabilize the elbows

* Advanced Modification; cross the monkey bars daily.

CARRYING

*Set the posture. Line up feet and knees, stack the pelvis, drop the ribs while bending at the knees if needed, and then assume the load.

*Change the position of the load between and during prolonged intervals. Examples; carrying a baby on one side and shifting the child to the other. If too far forward shift to the back. The same goes for carrying a backpack or purse. Switch arms testing the new grip and core strength as you go.

*Carry often. Use the stroller less and carry the child in arms even if it's only for a short period of time. Walk to the grocery store and carry the groceries in hand. Stack your own wood in the winter. Be creative and learn to use the body as it was intended.

GET DOWN, GET UP

*Sit on the floor, get back up, sit on the floor in a different way. Alternating postures as many times as possible in different ways

YOGA BALL

*Using a yoga ball, keep the feet on the floor. Scissor the legs wide with the top leg back and the bottom leg forward. Arc the body statically over the ball.



SIT AND SHIFT

*Sitting on bent knees with feet under the buttocks.

*Keep the torso upright and ribs down, lower the left hip to the left, resting it on the ground.

*Stay here for a moment, adding a slight shift side to side to the posture.

*Focus on using the muscles of the waist and slowly shift the hips to the right side.



*Alternate side to side and do as many reps (D5) as the body permits.

*Tight hip, Modification; if proper posture is difficult during this exercise, bolster (D2) to the right and left of the hips to prevent the body from going all the way to the floor.