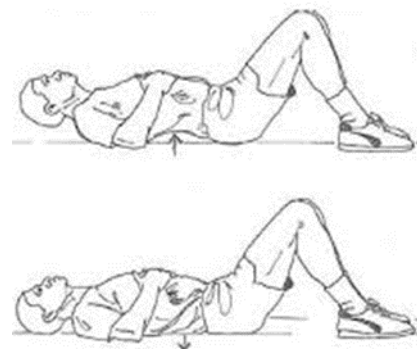


Core exercise programme

The below exercises are a starting point for anyone wanting to improve their general core strength. Please follow the exercises that your physiotherapist has advised you to do and speak to them if you have any concerns.

1. Pelvic tilts

- Lying on your back; bend your knees, keeping your feet and knees hip distance apart.
- *Slowly* arch your back to try and make a space between your lower back and the mat/floor.
- Then suck your belly-button in and *slowly* flatten your back along the floor/mat.
- Repeat ___ times.



Imagine headlights on your hip bones. Imagine tilting your headlights up and down along the roof as you arch and flatten your back.

2. Bridge

- Lying on your back, bend your knees, keeping your feet and knees hip distance apart.
 - *Slowly* tilt your hips back to flatten your back against the floor/mat and then squeeze your bottom muscles to curl your spine one bit at a time into a bridge position.
 - *Slowly* curl your spine back down to your starting position.
 - Repeat ___ times.
- You can change this exercise by placing a band around your knees and pushing out into the band as you do the bridge or by putting a pillow between your knees and squeezing into this as you do the bridge.
 - Make this even harder by lifting one leg up and doing a single-leg bridge (be sure to keep your hips level as you do this).



3. Side lying hip abduction

- Lie on your side and bend your bottom knee. Place your top hand in front of you on the mat/floor if you need extra support.
- Find a position where your top hip is directly above your bottom hip (make sure to keep your top hip directly above your bottom hip and don't let the hip rock backwards as you do the exercise).
- *Slowly* lift your top leg as high as you can keep your hips still, hold for 2-3seconds and *slowly* lower the leg back to tap the floor/mat.
- Repeat ___ times.



- You can make this more difficult by then keeping your leg at hip height and making small circles, 10 in each direction. Be sure to keep your knee straight as you do this and your hips still.

4. Abdominal crunch

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet hip distance apart.
- Clasp your hands together and place them behind your head, keeping your elbows just in your peripheral vision.
- *Slowly* lift your head and chest so that you are on the tips of your shoulder-blades and you can see between your legs.
- *Slowly* lower your head back to the floor/mat.
- Repeat ___ times.



5. Abdominal rotations

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet hip distance apart.
- Clasp your hands together and place them behind your head, keeping your elbows just in your peripheral vision.
- Slowly lift your head and chest so that you are on the tips of your shoulder-blades and you can see between your legs.
- *Slowly* twist your chest to one side until you can see just past the outside of the thigh and *slowly* come back to centre.
- Keep your head lifted and then *slowly* turn your chest towards the other side.
- Keep your elbows wide throughout.
- Repeat ___ times.

6. Wall squat

- Keeping your feet hip distance apart and your toes facing forwards, slide your back down the wall.
- Squeeze your bottom muscles until you can just see your big toes in between your knees.
- Keep your belly-button pulling in and keep your back and head against the wall.
- Hold for ___ seconds and repeat ___ times.



7. Wall push-ups

- Place your hands on the wall in line with your shoulders.
- Pull your belly-button in and keep this engaged throughout the exercise.
- *Slowly* bend your elbows and take your chest closer towards the wall, squeezing your bottom as you do this.
- *Slowly* straight your arms again.
- Repeat ___ times.



- You can make this harder by then doing this on your hands and knees. You can make it harder still by taking your knees further back until you are in more of a push-up position.

8. Cat / Camel

- In 4-point kneeling, make sure that your hands are under your shoulders and your knees are under your hips.
- Arch your back as much as you can, thinking about trying to get the back of your head and your bottom to touch.
- Come back to your starting position.
- Then, round your back as much as you can as if you were trying to get your nose and belly-button to touch.
- Repeat ___ times.



9. Superman

- Start in 4-point kneeling, with your hands under your shoulders and your knees under your hips.
- Pull your belly-button in towards your spine.
- *Slowly* straighten your opposite arm and leg out as straight as you can behind you, hold for 3 seconds and then *slowly* come back to your starting position.
- Repeat on the other side.



Try to keep your pelvis as still as possible throughout this exercise (imagine a cup of tea sitting at the bottom of your spine and not letting the tea spill as you lift your arms and legs).

10. Kneeling plank

- On your hands and knees, find a position where your hands are under your shoulders and your knees are under your hips. Tuck your toes underneath your feet.
- Draw your belly-button in and pull your shoulders away from your ears.
- Lift your knees 2cm away from the floor and hold for ___ seconds.
- Repeat ___ times.



Try to keep your back still as you lift your knees.

11. Hip stretch

- Sitting on a chair, place your foot on your other leg and lean forward over your legs.
- You should feel a stretch at the back of the hip.
- Hold for 30 seconds and repeat 3 times.



12. Leg stretch

- Sitting on a chair, straighten your leg out in front of you and pull your toes up towards you.
- You should feel a stretch at the back of the leg.
- Hold for 30 seconds and repeat 3 times.



***and never forget your pelvic floor muscle exercises 😊**

Further information

If you have any concerns or questions about the above exercises then please speak to your physiotherapist at your next appointment. Alternatively, you can contact the Pelvic Health Physiotherapy Department on 0118 322 7811 between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

A McArthur, Physio Band 5, June 2023. Next review due: June 2025