

EXERCISES

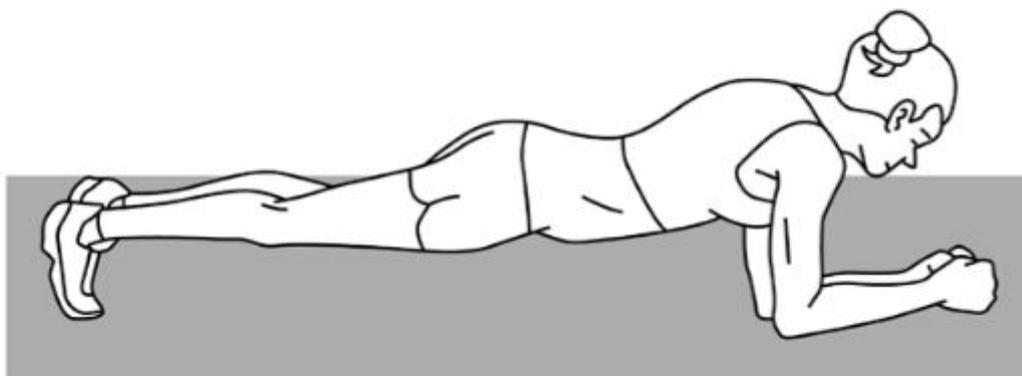
Why do we strengthen our core muscles?

The Significance of Core Strength - (to discuss with clients)

Our core is in the center of our body. It needs to be strong to support the weight of our entire body, including the back and neck. Adding core strengthening to our exercise routine can help protect our back and neck. By boosting our core strength, we'll also be less likely to rely on other back pain treatments, such as medications.

It's important to incorporate exercises that work all of the abdominal muscles equally. Core exercises should involve the major muscles in your abdomen, including internal and external obliques and the transverse abdominals.

Exercise 1: Plank



Technique:

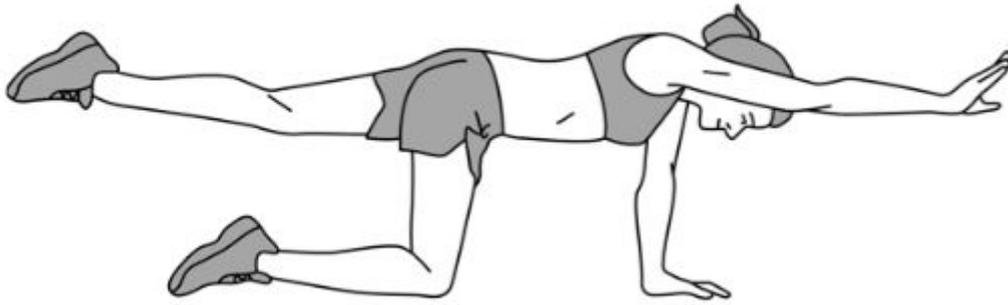
The basic plank exercise, also called a hover, is the starting place if you want to improve your core strength and stability. Here's how to do it right.

- Begin in the plank position with your forearms and toes on the floor.
- Keep your torso straight and rigid and your body in a straight line from ears to toes with no sagging or bending.
- Your head is relaxed and you should be looking at the floor.
- Hold this position for 10 seconds to start.
- Over time work up to 30, 45 or 60 seconds.

How Often?

Repeat 4 times, twice daily

Exercise 2: Birdog



Technique:

- Begin on all fours, hands directly under your shoulders and knees directly under your hips

Keep head aligned with spine (to help avoid tilting head, look at floor)

Keep buttocks and abdomen tight. Do not arch the back Lift one arm up and forward until it is level with torso; simultaneously lift the opposite leg in the same manner.

- Keep arm, spine, and opposite leg aligned as if they are forming a tabletop

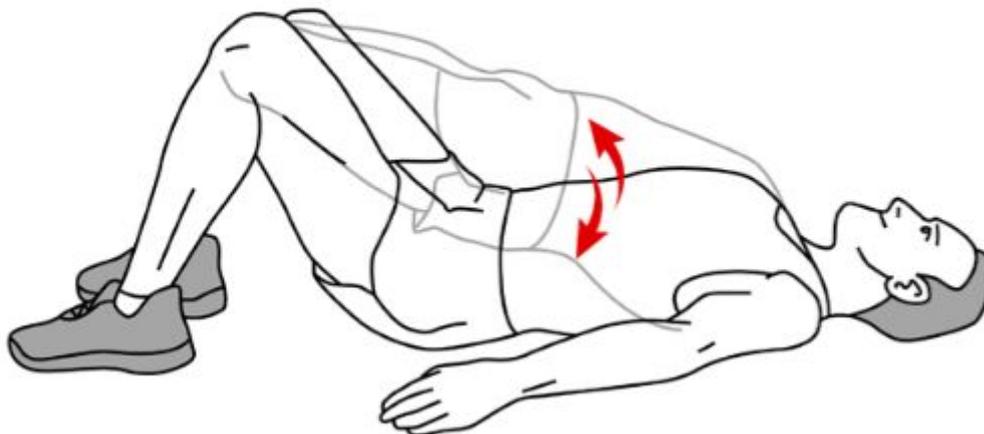
Balance yourself for 10-15 seconds then slowly return to starting position.

- Switch sides and repeat.
- Remember to breathe.

How Often?

Do ten repetitions each side twice daily

Exercise 3: Bridge



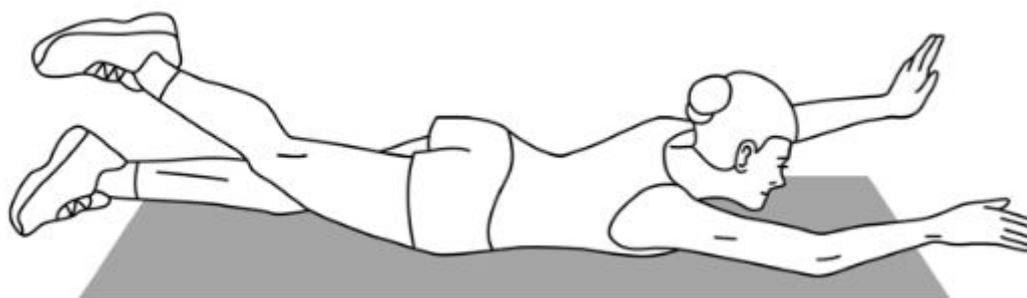
Technique:

- To improve core strength of several muscles in combination, try a 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 they your hips are aligned with your knees and shoulders (B). Hold for 20 to 30 seconds.
- Return to the start position and repeat.

How Often?

30 times twice daily

Exercise 4:



Technique:

- Strengthens back, lower back and glutes.
- Lie on stomach, arms reached out past your head with palms and

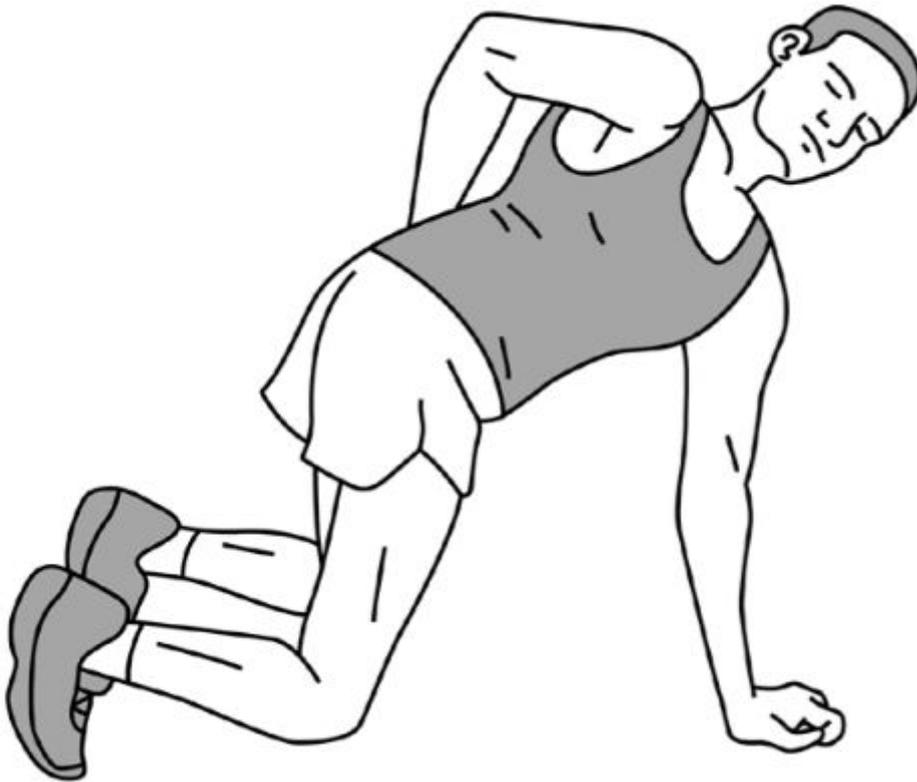
forehead on floor.

- Tighten abdominals.
- Lift one arm (as you raise your head and shoulders) and the opposite leg at the same time, stretching them away from each other.
- Hold for 5 seconds and then switch sides.

How Often?

Repeat 5 - 10 times each side twice daily

Exercise 5: Lumbar Spine Mobilization



Technique

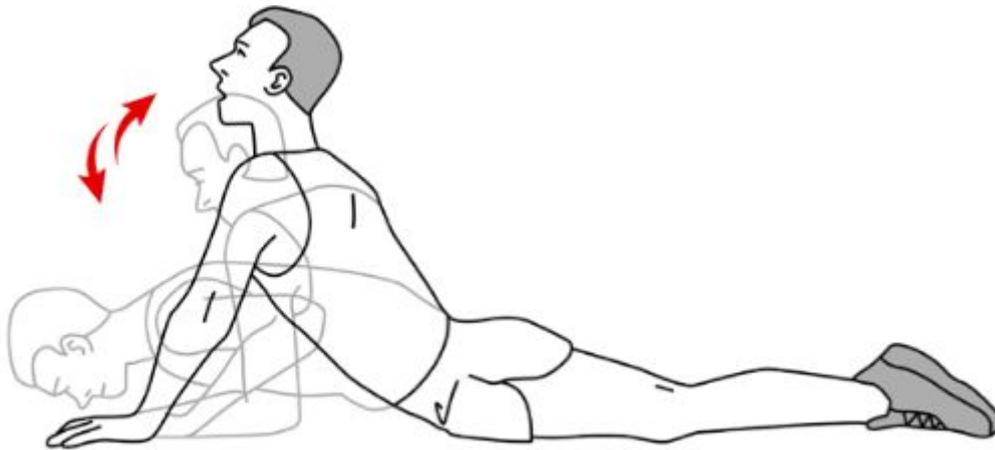
- Lay down on all fours.
- Place one hand behind the back.
- While the opposite hand remains on the floor.
- Rotate the upper body (side that the arm is behind the back) with the elbow pointing to the sky as far as possible.
- Return to start position

How Often?

Repeat 5-10 times each side, twice daily

Exercise 6: McKenzie Extension

Technique



- Start position: Lie on your stomach, and prop yourself on your elbows, lengthening your spine.
- Keep your shoulders back and neck long.
- Action: Keeping your neck long, arch your back up by pushing down on your hands.
- You should feel a gentle stretch in the stomach muscles as you arch backwards.
- Breathe and hold for 5 to 10 seconds.
- Return to the starting position.

How Often?

Repeat 3 times twice daily