

Physiotherapy

Shoulder Class – Week 5

The aim of this week's class is to explain the importance of a group of exercises commonly called core exercises.

The core refers to the area of your trunk between your ribs and your pelvis, and incorporates the abdominal muscles, pelvic floor muscles, and the diaphragm (which is important in breathing).

A strong core gives a firm foundation of support to your spine, and pelvis which is a main anchor for your leg muscles and also for your spine. When the core is weak, we naturally recruit other muscles to provide stability instead, and that means that we commonly over-use muscles around our upper shoulders and neck. If you carry tension in your neck and shoulders, then you may benefit from strengthening your core.

The exercises taught and provided here are just examples. There are many exercises and many ways of teaching them.

Basic core stability exercise

The basic core stability exercise was taught in week 1, so after 5 weeks of regular practice it should be second nature.



Patient Information

- Lie on your back with your knees bent, and rest your hands lightly on your tummy
- Contract your pelvic floor muscles (imagine that you are holding yourself from having a wee)
- Draw you tummy button in
- **Hold your tummy in for 10 second, repeat 10 times**

In the exercises that follow, try to maintain your core contraction. Try to breathe **evenly** as you move. If in doubt exhale as you push a limb out and then inhale as you bring it back.

Whilst doing these exercises pay attention to your spine, pelvis and neck. If you find that your back arches away from the floor, your pelvis wobbles, or the muscles around your throat tighten, then you may be trying an exercise that is too advanced for you, or you may need to contract your core more firmly.

Abdominal exercises



- Place your hands on your legs
- Keep your head in a neutral position (imagine you are holding an apple between your chin and your chest)
- Tighten your abdominals, slide your hands up your legs and raise your shoulders off the floor
- Slowly lower yourself back to the floor

Patient Information

“Scissors” lower abdominals with legs on stool



- Lying on your back, rest your legs on the stool
- Tighten your lower abdominals
- Lift one leg off the stool and bring your knee towards your body
- Then rest back onto the stool and change legs

“Obliques” in crook lying



- Lying on your back, rest your legs on a stool
- Tighten your lower abdominals
- Try and touch your hand to your opposite knee
- Change hands and repeat on the other side

Patient Information

Gym ball - sitting onto the gym ball



- Work in pairs or sit close to the wall/stool
- Sit onto the ball
- Feet on the floor and shoulder width apart
- Arms resting by your side
- Tighten your lower abdominals (draw your tummy button in towards your spine and tighten your pelvic floor)
- Upright posture, shoulders over hips and ears in line with shoulder, lengthen the back of your neck by gently drawing your chin in

Pelvic tilt on gym ball



- Sitting on the ball
- Try rocking your pelvis backwards and forwards and side to side allowing your lower spine to move only
- Maintain a good posture with your upper spine, neck and head

Patient Information

Rolling gym ball in kneeling



- Kneel behind the gym ball
- Press your elbows into the ball
- Tighten your lower abdominals
- Roll the ball away from your body

Press up over gym ball



- Kneel behind the gym ball
- Rest your body on the ball
- Hands on the floor, shoulder width apart and fingers pointing forwards
- Walk your hands out so that your legs are resting on the ball (walk out as far as you are comfortable)
- Tighten your lower abdominals

If you feel safe try and bend your elbows, lowering your upper body to the floor

Patient Information

Superman over the gym ball



- Kneel behind the gym ball
- Rest your body on the ball
- Hands on the floor, shoulder width apart and fingers pointing forwards
- Walk your hands out and keep your toes on the floor
- Tighten your lower abdominals
- Keep your shoulders level and raise one arm
- **Hold for a count of ten**

Progressions

If you wish to explore core exercises further, swimming is thought to be helpful or you could look for an exercise class such as “Pilates”. There is also a wide selection of books and DVD’s available to buy on this subject. The physiotherapy department can’t specifically recommend any individual product but advise that any exercise that you undertake is controlled and within pain tolerances. Usually one-to-one supervision with a qualified therapist or trainer would be best.

The APPI (Australian physiotherapy and Pilates Institute) train therapists in Pilates and sell a variety of useful DVD’s (www.ausphysio.com). They are not the only suitable provider of Pilates training and their products may not be appropriate for your particular needs.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please ask your physiotherapist and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Document History	
Department:	Physiotherapy
Contact:	26861
Updated:	October 2020
Review:	October 2022
Version:	3.1
Reference:	HIC/LFT/1898/15