

Argus Orthopaedic Zone

Core Muscle Exercise

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

If you didn't read last week's article about how important your core muscles are, this article alone won't mean much. You can easily catch up with us if you missed last week's class. Go to my office website www.orthopodsurgeon.com and you can easily locate last week's article "Core Exercise" in the Argus Orthopaedic Zone archive of Orthopaedic articles.

To briefly summarize last week, core muscles:

- Have everything to do with your balance
- They surround your center of gravity
- Core muscles stabilize your body as your arms and legs move
- In short without them you would be sort of a blob.

Balance Is Everything

Without proper balance you are an accident waiting to happen. Falls are almost epidemic it seems. Hardly a day goes by that I don't see someone who has broken something in a fall. Wrist fractures, spine fractures, hip fractures oh my. The list is huge.

I believe the majority of falls occur because the person has lost their balance.

Balance is not a simple subject; there are multiple reasons for poor balance, core weakness among them. But core strength is one of the reasons that can be addressed and treated.

Getting Started

The best way to insure proper exercise technique and receive the most benefit is to work with a physical therapist or athletic trainer. If you or someone in your family knows such a person they might be able to help you get started outside of their facility.

Where To Do Exercises

They can be done most easily on a carpeted floor. If you can't get up or down yourself you may need some assistance. Lying on a bed really doesn't do it. You need a more stable surface.

Pelvic Tilt

Pelvic tilt helps you build your core muscle strength.

To do pelvic tilt lie on your back with your knees bent.

- Flatten your back against the floor
- Tightening your abdominal muscles
- Tilt you pelvis slightly toward your belly button
- Hold to the count of 5 and release
- Repeat 10 times as a set
- Rest for a couple of minutes and repeat the set of 10 twice for a total of 3 sets.
- Do the exercises daily if at all possible

Bridge

Bridge exercise helps improve core strength of several muscles in combination.

Lie on your back with the knees bent.

- Keep your back in a neutral position – not arched or pressed into the floor
- Arms are to the side flat on the floor wherever comfortable
- Don't tilt your hips
- Tighten your abdominal muscles
- Pushing through the heels raise your hips off the floor
- Align your hips with your knees and shoulders
- Hold for 3 deep breaths
- Return to starting position
- Repeat 10 times as a set. Do a total of 3 sets.
- Do the exercises daily if at all possible

Conclusion

It is not as easy as it sounds. I know that. If you can have a family member or friend read this while you are trying to get started it may work a lot better.

If you can't seem to get it, please don't give up! You have to find a physical therapist or exercise instructor to help you. Ask around.

It is too important to ignore. Isn't it worth doing to avoid seeing me for a broken wrist or hip? It's up to you really. Give it a try. See you next week.

Office Website and Argus Orthopaedic Archive

I hope what you have read has raised questions. No problem!

Please log onto www.orthopodsurgeon.com. It has a huge amount of musculoskeletal information in the Website and the Archive of all previous Argus articles.

Check it out and be amazed what you can learn.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you. Be well.

Dr. Haverbush