

## Foam Roller Exercise Program

Foam rollers are a popular new addition the gym, physical therapy clinics or homes. Foam rollers are made of lightweight polyethylene foam. Cylindrical in shape, foam rollers are useful for stretching, myofascial release, flexibility and dynamic strengthening. Exercises on the foam roller increase core stability and body awareness as they enhance balance reactions and muscle re-education.

### Standard Foam Roller 36"x6"

- Economical
- Firm/more advanced
- Great for deep tissue massage



### Pro-roller Soft 36"x6"

- Soft and gentle
- More stable for high-risk users
- Versatile



\* Please note: The following exercises and stretches should NOT be painful. If any activity is painful, discontinue.

### UPPER BODY



#### Pectoral Stretch: T position

Lie with head and spine supported on foam roller and feet flat on floor. Place arms directly out to the side, as in forming the letter "T". You should feel the stretch in your chest/pectoral muscles and shoulders.

*Hold this position for 30 seconds while still breathing and repeat 3 times.*

#### Alternate Spine Massage

In this position, roll side to side to give your back muscles a massage. *Massage the area for 1 minute.*



#### Pectoral Stretch: Y position

Lie with head and spine supported on foam roller and feet flat on floor. Place arms directly out to the side, as in forming the letter "Y". You should feel the stretch in your chest/pectoral muscles and shoulders.

*Hold this position for 30 seconds while still breathing and repeat 3 times.*



#### **Upper Back Massage/Stretch**

Lie with foam roller under shoulder blades with your feet and glutes on floor and hands behind your head. Lift your hips off the floor and roll back and forth from top of shoulder blades to bottom of shoulder blades. It should feel like a massage; you may experience slight discomfort as the tissues are breaking up.

*Massage the area for 1 minute.*



#### **Push Up**

Begin with hands on the foam roller under shoulders, knees and toes on the ground. Press up until arms are straight, lifting knees off the ground. Bend your elbows bringing your body down towards the ground, then press back up to starting position. Keep body in a straight line as you lower and rise trying not to arch back.

*Perform 10 repetitions and repeat 3 times. Perform every other day.*



#### **Face Down T**

Lie on your stomach with the foam roller in the midline of your torso and toes on the floor. Begin with arms on the floor, straight out to the side in the "T" position, with thumbs pointing up to the ceiling. Lift arms up off the floor, pause for a second, and return to the floor.

*Perform 10 repetitions and repeat 3 times. Perform every other day. As you get stronger, you can add light hand weights (1-3 pounds).*



#### **Face Down Y**

Lie on your stomach with the foam roller in the midline of your torso. Begin with arms on the floor, straight out to the side in the "Y" position, with thumbs pointing up to the ceiling. Lift arms up off the floor, pause for a second, and return to the floor.

*Perform 10 repetitions and repeat 3 times. Perform every other day. As you get stronger, you can add light hand weights (1-3 pounds).*

## **LOWER BODY**



### **ITB Massage**

Begin with the foam roller under the hip on the side you will be massaging. Keeping the bottom leg straight, cross top leg over the bottom, placing foot flat on floor and supporting your upper body with arms. Using your arms, roll back and forth along the leg, from hip to just above the knee. \*Do not cross knee joint. It should feel like a massage; you may experience slight discomfort as the tissues are breaking up.

*Massage area for 1 minute on each side.*



### **Glutes Massage**

Begin with the foam roller under the glutes on the side you will be massaging. Keeping the bottom leg straight, cross top leg over the bottom, placing foot flat on floor, and supporting your upper body with arms. Using your arms, roll back and forth along the glutes. It should feel like a massage; you may experience slight discomfort as the tissues are breaking up.

*Massage the area for 1 minute on each side.*



### **Hamstring Massage**

Sit with foam roller under straight legs, supporting upper body with arms on floor behind you. Roll along your hamstrings from beginning of glute region to just above knee. \*Do not roll over knee joint. It should feel like a massage; you may experience slight discomfort as the tissues are breaking up.

*Massage the area for 1 minute.*



### **Calf Massage**

Sit with foam roller under calves with legs straight, supporting upper body with arms on floor behind you. Roll back and forth along your calves. It should feel like a massage; you may experience slight discomfort as the tissues are breaking up.

*Massage the area for 1 minute.*

*Care at its Best!*



**Hip Flexor Stretch**

Lie on your back with foam roller under top of pelvis. Bring one knee up towards your chest using your hands while keeping the leg you are stretching straight out. Try to keep the heel on the floor. You should feel the stretch in your thigh/groin region.  
*Hold this position for 30 seconds while still breathing and repeat 3 times on each side.*

**CORE AND BACK**



**Transverse Abdominus Level 2**

Lie with your head and back on the foam roller and your feet on the floor. Draw your core (stomach) muscles in and up (as if you are pulling your belly button down towards the ground). Once you can hold this muscle contraction, try to lift one foot off the floor.  
*Hold this position for 10 seconds while still breathing. Repeat 10 times on each leg.*



**Transverse Abdominus Level 3**

Lie with your head and back on the roller and feet on the floor. Draw your core muscles in and up. Lift one foot off the floor and extend the leg straight out. Bend it back in and lower to floor.  
*Hold the leg out for 10 seconds while still breathing. Repeat 10 times on each leg.*



**Transverse Abdominus Level 4**

Lie with your head and back on the foam roller. Bend both knees up at a 90° angle and draw your core muscles in and up. Straighten one leg and then return to starting position.  
*Hold the leg out for 10 second whiles still breathing. Repeat 10 times on each leg.*

*Care at its Best!*



**Alternate Arm and Leg**

Lie with your head and back on the foam roller and feet on the floor. Lift one foot off the floor as you reach the opposite arm up overhead.

*Hold for 10 seconds while still breathing. Repeat 10 times on each side.*



**Plank**

Place your forearms on the roller with your knees down on the mat. Lift knees off to form a plank position. Try to keep your body in a straight line; do not arch your back.

*Hold for 10 seconds while still breathing and repeat 10 times.*



**Bridge**

Lie on your back and place feet on roller. Lift your hips up towards the ceiling.

*Hold for 10 seconds while still breathing and repeat 10 times.*



**Bridge with Leg Extension**

Lie on your back and place feet on roller. Lift your hips up towards the ceiling and then extend one leg out in front. Keep hips level.

*Hold for 10 seconds while still breathing, place the foot back down on the roller and repeat with the other leg. Repeat 10 times on each leg.*

*Care at its Best!*



**Table Top Position**

Lie with your head and back supported on the roller. Bring your legs up with knees bent. \*Draw belly button in to prevent arching of the back.

*Hold for 10 seconds while still breathing, and then rest your feet back down to the mat. Repeat 10 times.*



**Toe Taps**

In a Table Top Position, aim the toes of one foot down toward the mat. Take the foot down as far as you can without any back strain. \*Don't forget to draw in the belly button. The goal is to be able to touch the floor. Pick the foot back up and repeat with the other leg.

*Repeat 10 times on each leg while still breathing.*



**Alternate Toe Taps**

In a Table Top Position, perform the Toe Taps exercise walking your toes forward on the mat and then back toward the roller. \*Don't forget to draw in the belly button.

*Perform 3 taps forward, 3 taps back. Repeat 10 times on each leg while still breathing.*



**Double Toe Taps**

From the Table Top Position, lower both feet down toward the mat with the toes pointed as low as you can without back strain. \*Don't forget to draw in the belly button. Lift the legs back up to starting position.

*Repeat 10 times while still breathing.*

*Care at its Best!*



#### Heel Taps

In a Table Top Position, aim the heels of one foot down toward the mat. Take the foot down as far as you can without any back strain. \*Don't forget to draw in the belly button. Pick the foot back up and repeat with the other leg.

*Repeat 10 times on each leg while still breathing.*



#### Double Heel Taps

From the Table Top Position, lower both feet down toward the mat with flexed feet as low as you can without back strain. \*Don't forget to draw in the belly button. Lift the legs back up to the starting position.

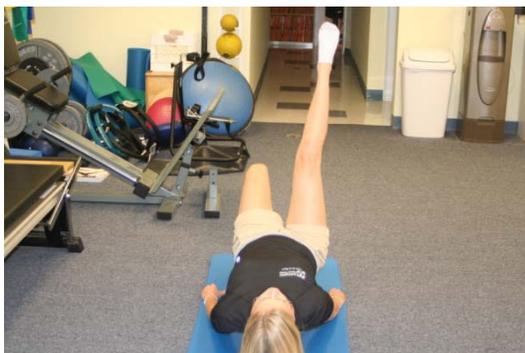
*Repeat 10 times while still breathing.*



#### Scissors

Lie with the foam roller under your hips. Keep your weight on your shoulder blades on the floor. Straighten legs up to the ceiling and draw in your core muscles. Lower one leg down to 45 degrees and then switch legs.

*Perform 10 sets while still breathing.*



#### Leg Circles

Lie with your head and back supported on the foam roller. Draw in your core muscles. Straighten one leg up to the ceiling and draw circles in the air with that leg.

*Perform 10 repetitions one way, and then 10 the other direction. Switch legs and repeat on the other side.*

*Care at its Best!*



**Crunch**

Lie with your back and head supported on the foam roller. With your hands behind your head, lift your head up as you perform a crunch, drawing your core muscles in. Lower the head back down.

*Perform 10 repetitions and repeat 3 times.*



**Crunch with Leg Lift**

Lie with your back and head on the foam roller. As you lift your head up in the crunch position, lift one leg up. Lower the head and leg together.

*Perform 10 repetitions and repeat 3 times.*



**Oblique Crunch**

Lie with your head and back on the foam roller. As you lift your head up in the crunch position, aim your elbow towards the opposite knee. Lower the head and leg and repeat on the other side.

*Perform 10 repetitions on each side and repeat 3 times.*



**Back Extension**

Lie on your stomach and place your forearms on the roller. Lift your head and shoulders up and slide the roller in toward your chest as you come up as far as you can. Hold for 10 seconds while still breathing and repeat 10 times.



**Plank with Leg Lift**

Begin with hands on the foam roller under shoulders, knees and toes on the ground. Press up lifting knees off the ground and arms straight. Lift one leg straight back.

*Hold for 5 seconds and then lower the leg back down. Repeat on each leg 10 times.*



**Plank with Knee Bend**

Begin with hands on the foam roller under shoulders, knees and toes on the ground. Press up lifting knees off the ground and arms straight. Lift one leg straight back, bend your knee into your chest, and then lower the leg back down.

*Perform 10 sets on each leg.*



**Kneeling Arm Lift**

Kneeling on the floor, place your hands on the foam roller. Lift one arm up and hold for 10 seconds, and then lower it back down.

*Repeat 10 times on each side.*

The information on these pages is provided to you from Performance Physical Therapy. It is not intended to replace any information/treatment provided to you by your health care provider. If you experience any pain while participating in these exercises, please contact your health care provider. Please feel free to check with your Physical Therapist if you have questions about the information provided on this page.

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