

EXERCISE SHEET FOR LOWER BACK PAIN

Double Leg Stretch

Aim

- To challenge lumbo – pelvic control with upper and lower limb sagittal plane movements.
- To challenge scapula – thoracic stability with dissociated movement of the upper limbs.
- To challenge co-ordination.



- Inhale to prepare
- Exhale, lift both arms to 90 degrees, placing hands over shoulders. Palms facing away from the face.
- Inhale & hold this position.
- Exhale, lower both arms overhead as far as control can be maintained. Ensure that the ribcage remains soft.
- Simultaneously, slide the left heel forwards along the mat away from the sitting bone.
- Inhale, circle the arms outwards and downwards in the shape of a D, finishing the D shape with the hands above the shoulders. As the arms move back to the starting position so the heel slides back in. The arm and leg movement happen at the same time.
- Repeat 10 times.

Scissors

Aim

- To maintain lumbo – pelvic control with open chain, reciprocal, sagittal plane movements
- To train dissociation of hip flexion / extension from the pelvis.



- The starting position is flat on your back with the knees flexed so that your feet are flat on the floor.
- Inhale to prepare.
- Exhale, slide the right foot inwards towards the sitting bone and then float this leg into the table top position (90 degree flexion of the knee and the hip).
- Inhale and hold this position.
- Exhale, slide the left foot inwards towards the sitting bone and then into the table top position.
- Inhale and hold this position with both legs up.
- Exhale, lower the left leg and tap the tips of the toes on the mat.
- Inhale, lift this leg back into table top. Exhale, and repeat with the right leg.
- Repeat this process 10 times.
- This exercise can be made more challenging by simultaneously performing the movement of the legs together. For example right leg up into table top, then as you lower the right leg lift the left leg into table top.

Hundred

Aim

- To develop the strength and control of the lower abdominals.



- Start flat on your back, with your feet flat on the floor and your knees bent.
- Suck your belly towards your back bone to stabilize your core.
- Lift your feet off the floor so that your knees are over your hips and your lower legs are parallel to the floor.
- Then lift your upper back & head three inches off the floor and hold. Straighten your elbows and place them in 30 degrees abduction.
- Then shake them from the shoulder, while you hold the legs and head off the floor.
- Try to develop your strength over a period of time, until you can perform 100 shakes of the arms.
- **Advanced Method:** Complete the same techniques, except the legs are straightened at 45 degrees of hip flexion.

Clam

Aim

- The aim of this exercise is to isolate posterior fibres of the gluteus medius muscle.
- To retrain correct timing of activation between the gluteus medius and the surrounding hip muscles
- To challenge rotary control of the pelvis.



- Start in a side lying position.
- Underneath arm outstretched in alignment with the trunk with your knees bent up to approx. 90 degrees. Shoulders and hips stacked one on top of the other. Top hand resting on the floor.
- Draw the top hip downwards away from the top shoulder to create a small space between your waist and the mat.
- Inhale to prepare.
- Gently draw the sitting bones towards one another to engage the gluteals.
- Exhale and lift the top knee upwards, keeping the feet together.
- Inhale and lower the top knee onto the bottom leg.
- Repeat 10 times on each side.
- This exercise can be made more challenging by lifting the feet off the ground by 8 inches and performing the same exercise in that position.

Dead Bug

Aim:

- To add tone and coordination to the lumbo – pelvic area.
- The exercise requires the ability to maintain good posture while moving both the arms and legs at the same time.



- Start flat on the back and draw legs up, until knees are above hips and lower legs are parallel to the floor. Shoulders are flexed to 90 degrees so that hands are above the shoulders and elbows are extended.
- The belly is sucked towards the back bone slightly and the lower back is flattened against the floor. Be careful not to over tense the abdominals.
- Then the right leg is lowered and straightened until it is eight inches off the floor. At the same time the left shoulder is flexed fully so that the arm lowers towards the ground.
- Both limbs are then returned to the starting position under control and the process is repeated on the other side.
- The exercise is repeated 15 times.

Alligator

Aim:

- To mobilizes your whole spine with a side to side movement and is a great exercise to increase spinal flexibility
- It should be performed in one fluid motion from one side to the other.



- Start on all fours with your back flat and your neck in a relaxed position. Position your arms directly under your shoulders, and bend your hips and knees at right angles. Keep your feet together.
- Take a deep breath in.
- Breathing out, turn your head and pelvis to the left and towards each other, feeling the stretch along the right side of your body.
- Repeat the motion to the other side.
- To increase the stretch you can perform it on your knees as shown.
- Repeat 10 times.

Lumbar Roll

Aim:

- This exercise increases the mobility of the joints and muscles in your lower back.



- Lie flat on your back with your arms spread out to the side.
- Flex one knee and place it next to the other leg, roll the knee over to the other side of the body, so that it rotates your spine. You can place your hand on the opposite knee to help.
- Try and keep the other shoulder on the floor. Hold this position for twenty seconds.
- Repeat 10 times.

Neck Stretch

Aim:

- To increase the ROM
- To reduce the tension of the posterior neck muscles.



- Kneel on the floor with your right hand holding onto your shin bone.
- Place your left hand on your right ear and pull your left ear towards your left shoulder.
- Hold this position for 10 seconds. You should feel a stretch in your right upper trap.
- Repeat on the other side and perform 5 sets.

Thoracic Rotation

Aim:

- To stretch is to mobilize the thoracic spine, specifically in the rotational direction.



- Kneel on the floor and hold your arms.
- Try to keep your elbows in line with your shoulders.
- Turn your head and shoulders as far to the left as possible.
- Hold for 10 seconds, then perform on the right hand side.
- Repeat 5 times on each side.



Thoracic Stretch

Aim:

- To work the muscles of your upper back and shoulder
- To help reduce thoracic kyphosis.



- Kneel on an exercise mat and lower your body forwards slowly and carefully, extending your arms forwards so that your forehead touches the mat.
- Press down against the floor with your hands and forearms, and ease your buttock backwards as far as you can.
- Hold this position for 20 seconds.
- Repeat 5 times.

Quad Stretch

Aim

- To lengthen the quadriceps muscles.



- Lie on the side of the body in a straight line.
- Flex the top leg and the knee and use the top hand to hold the ankle in that position. To get best results extend the hip slightly making sure that the knee is behind the line of the hip.
- Pull the heel towards the backside and hold for 10 to 20 seconds, keep breathing deeply.
- Repeat 5 times on both legs.

Chest Stretch

Aim

- To lengthen the pectoral complex
- To open up the chest.



- Stand in a door frame and place one flexed elbow against the frame at around shoulder level.
- Move 10 inches forward in the door frame to stretch the pectorals and then rotate away from the arm so the muscle is stretched further.
- Hold this position for 10 to 20 seconds.
- Repeat on both sides 5 times.

Rock & Roll

Aim:

- To gently massage & mobilise the joints of the lumbar spine.
 - Lie flat on your back and bring your knees into your chest.
 - Place both arms around your knees so you are rolled into a ball.
 - Then gently rock back and forth, up & down & side to side.
 - Repeat for 30 seconds to 1 min.