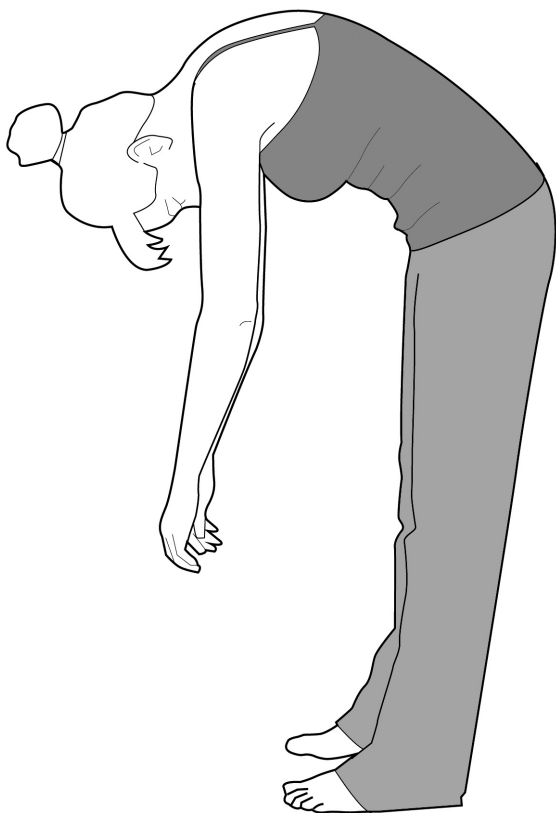
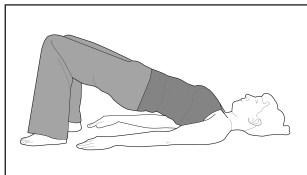
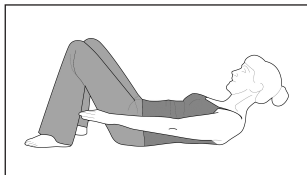
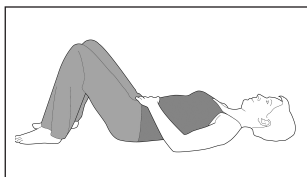


Post natal exercises



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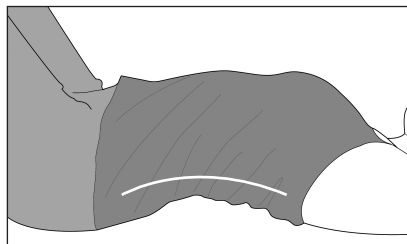
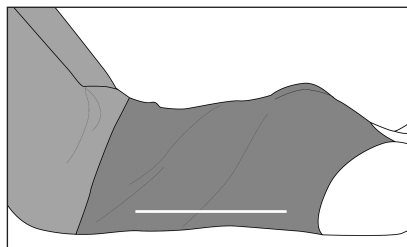
Pelvic Tilt

- Lie on your back, knees bent, feet & knees hip width apart
- Breathe in to prepare then engage your core muscles
- Breathe out & tilt your pelvis to flatten your lower back into the floor
- Inhale, tilt the other direction to exaggerate the arch in your lower back

Repeat this ____ times

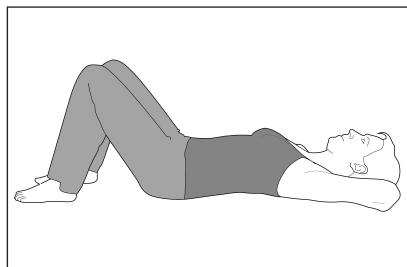
Watchpoints:

- *Do not to push through your feet or lift your buttocks*
- *Also try this exercise in sitting and standing*



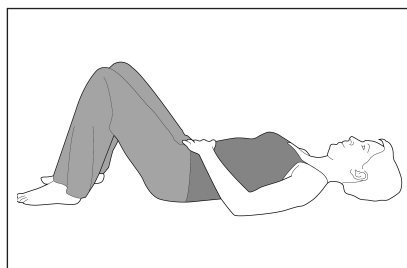
Neutral spine

- After you have completed your pelvic tilting exercise above, now find the middle point between these two ranges of movement. Your lower back should have a small arch only.
- This is your neutral spine
- You can find this neutral spine position in a similar way when you are sitting, standing or lying on your side and you need to adopt this position before each of the following exercises



Engaging Core Muscles

- You will need to brace or activate your core muscles and gently hold them for the duration of the following exercise
- Breathe in to prepare
- While you breathe out, close your back passage & gently draw this muscles towards your belly button
- At the same time, gently engage your deep lower abdominal muscles as if pulling away from a low-slung belt (your Physiotherapist will teach you how to feel for these muscle if you're not sure). Try to gently breathe in and out as you hold these muscles



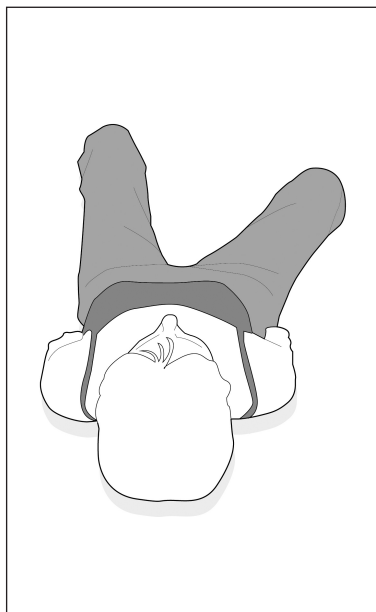
Knee Drop Out

- Lie as shown opposite and find your neutral spine
- Breathe in to prepare then engage your core muscles
- Breathe out and allow your right knee to slowly & gently move away from your body
- Breathe in to draw the knee back in

Repeat x ____ alternating legs

Watchpoints:

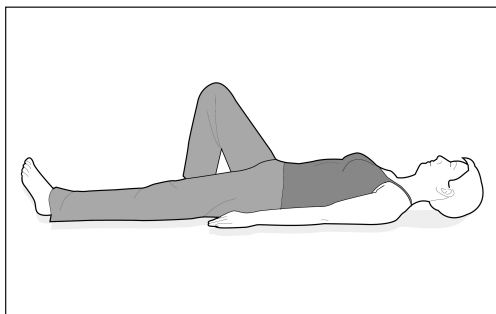
- *Don't allow your hips to move from right to left when your knee moves*
- *As soon as you feel any movement in your pelvis, breathe in and draw the knee back in*
- *Use your lower stomach muscles to bring the knee back to centre*



One leg stretch

- Lie as shown opposite and find your neutral spine
- Breathe in to prepare then engage your core muscles
- Breathe out gently slide one heel away until your leg is straight
- Breathe in and gently draw the heel back to the starting position

Repeat x ____ alternating legs



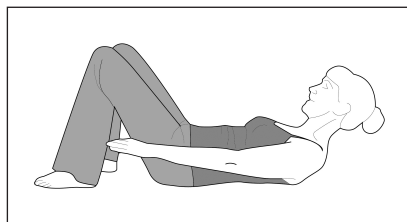
Watchpoint:

- *Remain in neutral spine through the whole exercise*
- *Keep your heel in contact with the floor*

Abdo prep

- Lie as shown opposite and find your neutral spine
- Breathe in & engage your core muscles
- Lengthen through the back of the neck, tucking chin to chest
- Breathe out - slide shoulder blades down your back
- Flex thoracic spine allowing neck & head to gently lift
- Simultaneously hover arms off the floor & reach finger tips to toes
- Breathe in to hold
- Breathe out and lower back to neutral starting from the ribcage & feeling each part of the back lower until lastly, the head

Repeat x ____



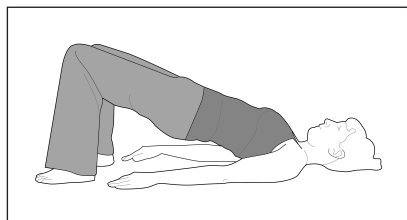
Watchpoints:

- *Be careful not to strain your neck muscles*
- *You can support your head with one hand if needed*

Bridge

- Breathe in and engage your core
- Breathe out and gently tilt the pelvis back, flattening your lower back into the floor
- Lift your tailbone and gently peel your spine off the floor bone by bone until you are resting on your shoulder blades
- Breathe in to hold
- Breathe out to gently return to the start position, lowering the lower ribcage first then bone by bone until lastly the tailbone touches the floor

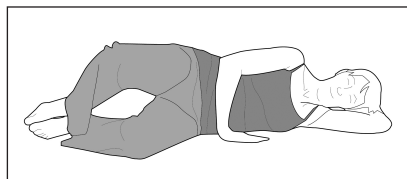
Repeat x ____



Clam

- Lie on your side with your knees bent up in front of you, feet in line with your spine
- Assume a neutral spine
- Stack your shoulders and hips one on top of the other
- Breathe in to prepare and engage your core
- Breathe out and lift the top knee, keeping the feet together
- Breathe in to lower the knee

Repeat x ____ on each side



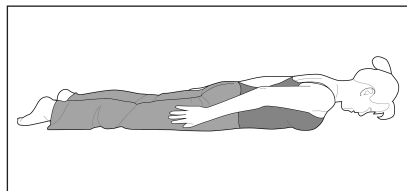
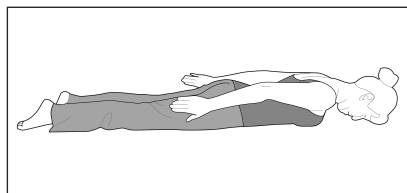
Watchpoint:

- *DO NOT allow your top hip to drop backwards as you lift the knee. This may be a small movement at first*

Breast stroke prep

- Lie on your front, rest forehead on a folded towel, keep the back of your neck long
- Rest arms along your sides with palms facing inwards
- Check legs are hip-distance apart & your in neutral spine
- Breathe in to prepare and engage your core
Breathe out & slide the shoulder blades together and gently away from the ears
- Simultaneously reach the fingers towards the feet & allow the arms to hover 1-2 inches off the floor
- Breathe in to hold
- Breathe out to relax the shoulder blades & arms down

Repeat x ____



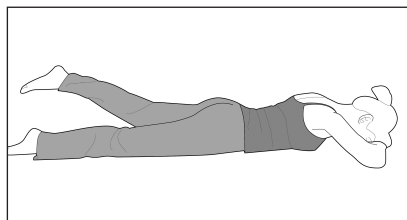
Watchpoint:

- *DO NOT allow your lower back muscles to activate*

Swimming

- Lie on your front (as shown) & set neutral spine
- Rest your forehead on the back of your hands with your neck long
- Glide your shoulder blades down towards your waist
- Breathe in to prepare and engage your core
- Engage your gluteal muscles by gently drawing your sitting bones in towards each other
- Breathe out & reach one leg backwards and away from your body and hover just one inch off the floor
- Breathe in as you gently lower the leg

Repeat x ____ alternating legs



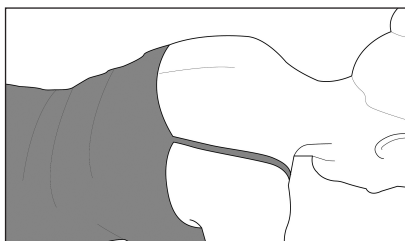
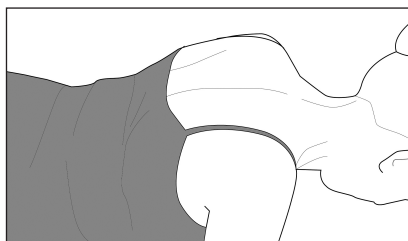
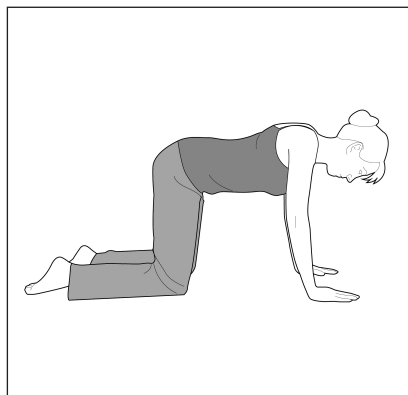
Watchpoint:

- *DO NOT allow your lower back muscles to activate or arch*

Scapula dips & stabilisations

- Start in 4 point kneeling (as shown)
- Position your hands slightly in front of your shoulders and as wide as the mat, knees directly beneath your hips
- Set neutral spine and core
- Breathe in & lower the breast bone towards the floor as you feel the shoulder blades gently draw together at the back
- Breathe out & lift the breast bone away from the floor as the shoulder blades separate

Repeat x _____

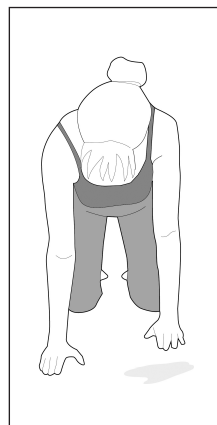
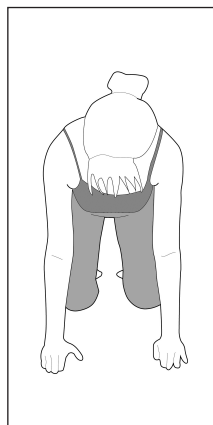


- Breathe in to prepare
- Breathe out & lift one hand just 3 inches off the floor
- Breathe in to hold
- Breathe out to lower

Repeat x _____

Watchpoints:

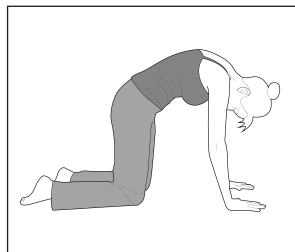
- *Keep the neck long & eyes looking between the hands*
- *Elbows soft or slightly bent throughout*
- *Avoid moving anything but your shoulders*



Cat stretch

- Start in 4 point kneeling (as shown)
- Position your hands slightly in front of your shoulders and as wide as the mat, knees directly beneath your hips
- Breathe in to prepare and engage your core
- Breathe out as you tuck your tail between your legs, drawing your belly button towards your spine & gently lift your ribcage
- Continue to curl your mid and upper spine towards the ceiling and tuck your chin in to look at your knees creating a rainbow shape from your tail to your head
- Breathe in to hold
- Breathe out to lengthen your spine and uncurl from the tail to the top of the head

Repeat x _____

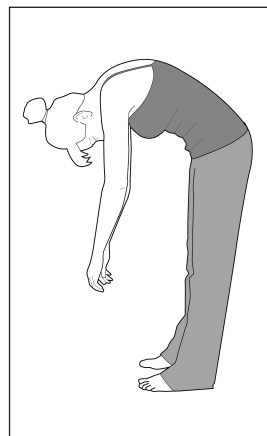


Watchpoint:

- *Ensure you don't go past neutral spine - so don't allow your lumbar spine to dip after the stretch*

Roll down

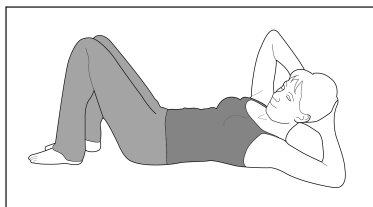
- Stand with feet hip width apart
- Assume an upright posture with your pelvis in neutral spine
- Breathe in and engage your core
- Breathe out as you roll your head forward, tucking your chin into your chest
- Then roll each bone slowly forward, starting with your shoulders, your mid then lower spine and finally allowing your pelvis to tilt forward
- Let your arms and head hang loose throughout the exercise
- Hang as you breathe in
- Breathe out as you gently unroll starting from the pelvis, to return to standing



Oblique prep.

- Lie as shown opposite and find your neutral spine
- One hand supporting the head with elbow wide
- Breathe in to prepare
- Breathe out, bend and rotate the upper body in a diagonal line, so that your breast bone points towards your opposite knee
- Breathe in to hold
- Breathe out & lower back down into starting position, neck and head lowering last

Repeat x _____ then swap to repeat on the other side



Watchpoint:

- *Ensure a Physiotherapist has checked you do not have a gap between your abdominal muscles before you try this exercise*

**Don't forget to stretch after your exercise session & practice regularly
to gain strength & control**

**Please ensure you have had your abdominal muscles measured and have
taken advice from a Physiotherapist before commencing these exercises**

Produced by the Women's Health Physiotherapy Department, University Hospital

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