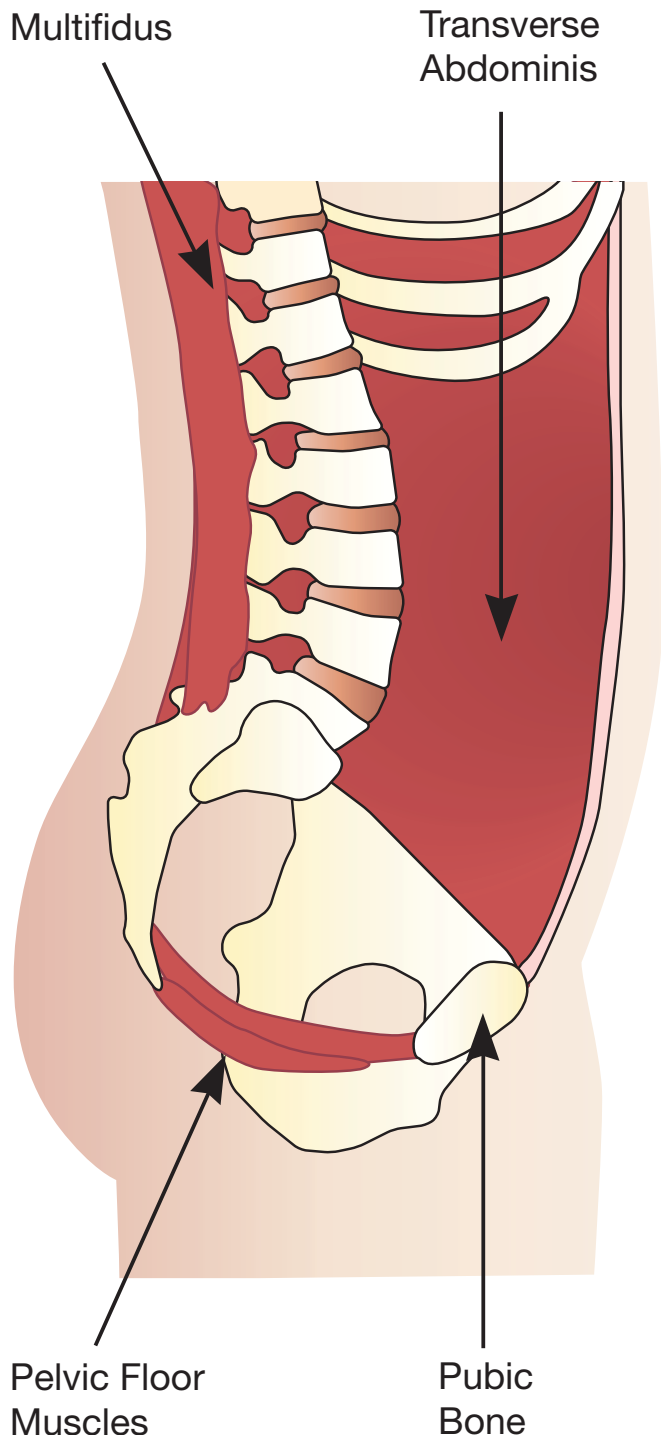


# Core Stability Exercise Programme

## Glossary of Terms

### Core Stability Muscles



**Core Stability** – the stability of the human trunk

**Core Stability Muscles** – the muscles that stabilise the trunk. The main muscles involved are shown above: Transverse Abdominis, Multifidus and the Pelvic Floor Muscles.

**Transverse Abdominis** – is like a corset around your tummy.

**Multifidus** – lies along the back of your spine connecting one vertebra to the other.

**Pelvic Floor Muscles** – are just inside your body between your legs. They form a sling from the pubic bone at the front to the base of your spine at the rear. These are the muscles you squeeze to stop yourself from passing urine or wind.

# Core Stability Exercises

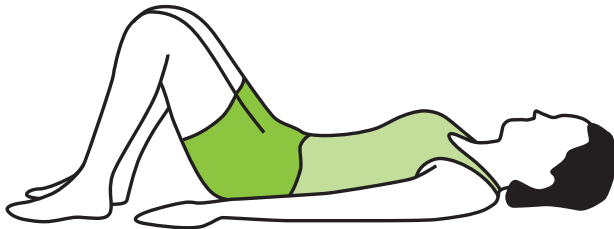
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## Table Top: Base Level

Lie on your back with knees bent up, feet flat on the floor hip distance apart, and arms by your sides.

Relax your head and neck. Lengthen through the top of the head to elongate the spine. Imagine you are holding an orange between your chin and chest. Gently draw your shoulder blades down towards your waist.

To find the 'neutral position' of your spine imagine your pelvis is a bucket of water. As you tip it backwards to spill water out of the back of the bucket your back will flatten on to the mat. As you tip it forwards to spill water out of the front of the bucket your back will arch. Your 'neutral spine' is the position half way between these two movements. In neutral there should be a small gap between the back of your waist and the floor.

To engage your core muscles, gently pull your tummy in, and pull your pelvic floor up and in, as if you are stopping yourself from passing urine and wind at the same time. Hold and sustain this contraction as you breathe.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times.

# Core Stability Exercises

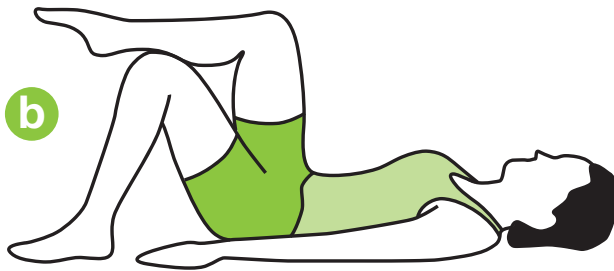
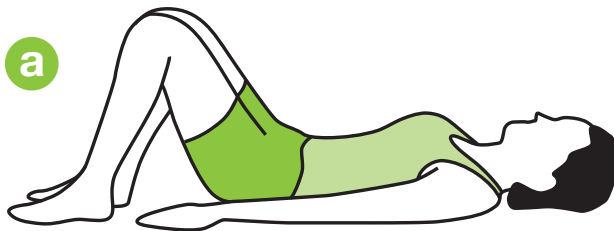
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## Table Top: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your back with knees bent up, feet flat on the floor hip distance apart, and arms by your sides. Relax your head and neck. Gently draw your shoulder blades down towards your waist. Ensure that your spine is in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Lift one foot off the floor and bring the knee over the hip so that the hip and knee are flexed to 90 degrees. Maintain a neutral spine throughout the exercise.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

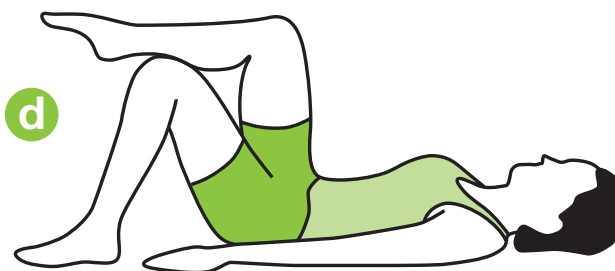
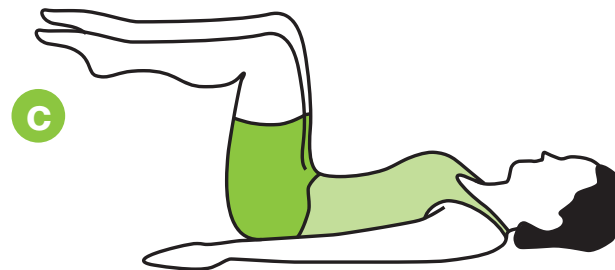
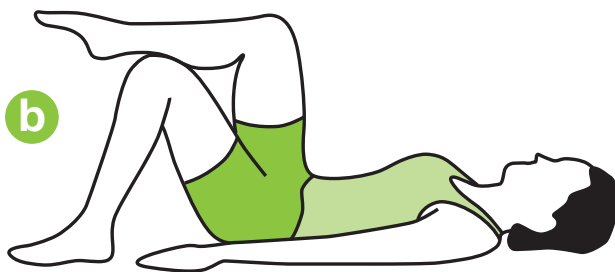
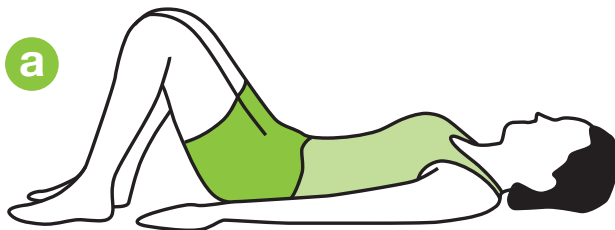
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## Table Top: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your back with knees bent up, feet flat on the floor hip distance apart, and arms by your sides. Relax your head and neck. Gently draw your shoulder blades down towards your waist. Ensure that your spine is in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Lift one foot off the floor and bring the knee over the hip so that the hip and knee are flexed to 90 degrees.
- c** Slowly lift the second knee to 90 degrees, to the tabletop position.
- d** Maintain a neutral spine as you lower one foot to touch the floor and then return to the tabletop position. Do not allow the back to arch and do not allow the stomach to bulge forward.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

Slowly lower legs one at a time.

# Core Stability Exercises

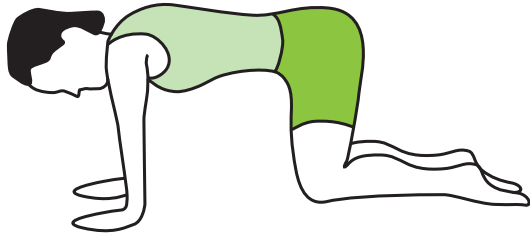
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## 4-Point Kneeling: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

On hands and knees with knees hip distance apart, knees directly under hips, hands directly under shoulders, and spine in neutral.

Engage core stability muscles by gently pulling up with your pelvic floor muscles, and gently pulling your stomach in.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times.

# Core Stability Exercises

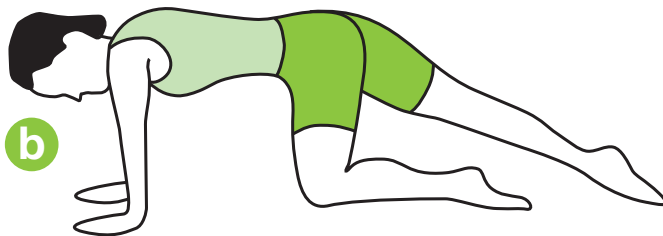
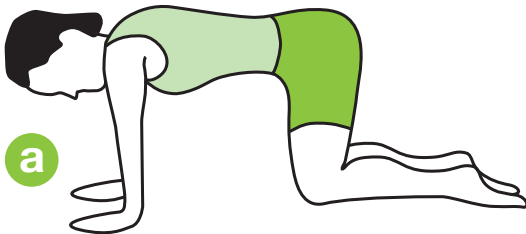
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## 4-Point Kneeling: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** On hands and knees with knees hip distance apart, knees directly under hips, hands directly under shoulders, spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Maintain a neutral spine as you slide one foot in a straight line away from the body, then slide foot back to start position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

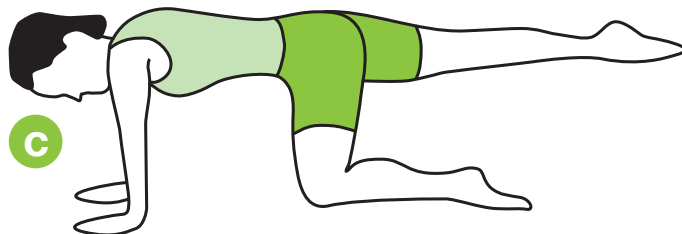
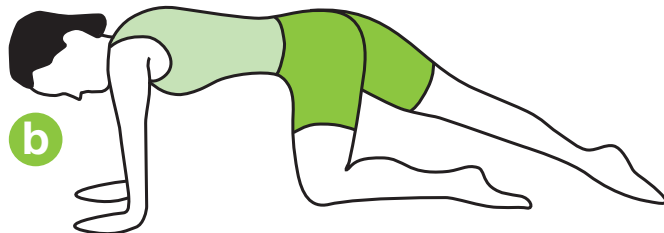
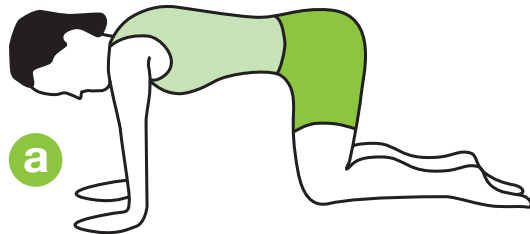
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## 4-Point Kneeling: Level 3

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** On hands and knees with knees hip distance apart, knees directly under hips, hands directly under shoulders, spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Maintain a neutral spine as you slide one foot in a straight line away from the body.
- c** When the leg is straight lift the leg slowly off the floor, then lower and slide back to start position. Start with a small movement, and only lift as far as a neutral spine allows.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

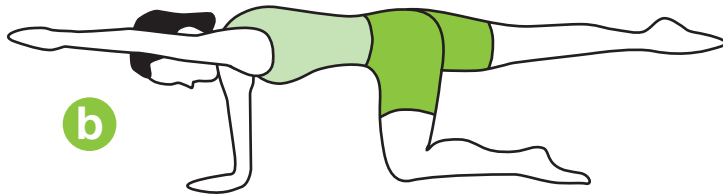
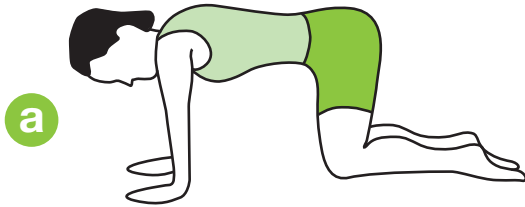
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## 4-Point Kneeling: Level 4

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** On hands and knees with knees hip distance apart, knees directly under hips, hands directly under shoulders, spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Maintain a neutral spine as you lift one leg and the opposite arm slowly off the floor. Start with a small movement and lift only as far as a neutral spine allows.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg and left arm.

Repeat ..... times with left leg and right arm.



# Core Stability Exercises

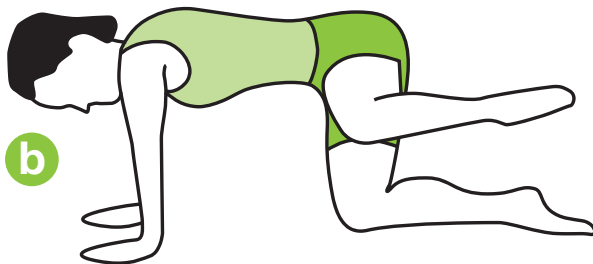
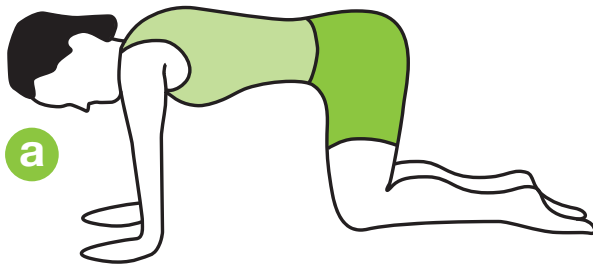
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## 4-Point Kneeling Side Lift:

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** On hands and knees with knees hip distance apart, knees directly under hips, hands directly under shoulders, spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Lift one leg out to the side. Do not let your pelvis twist and only move as far as a neutral, stable spine allows.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

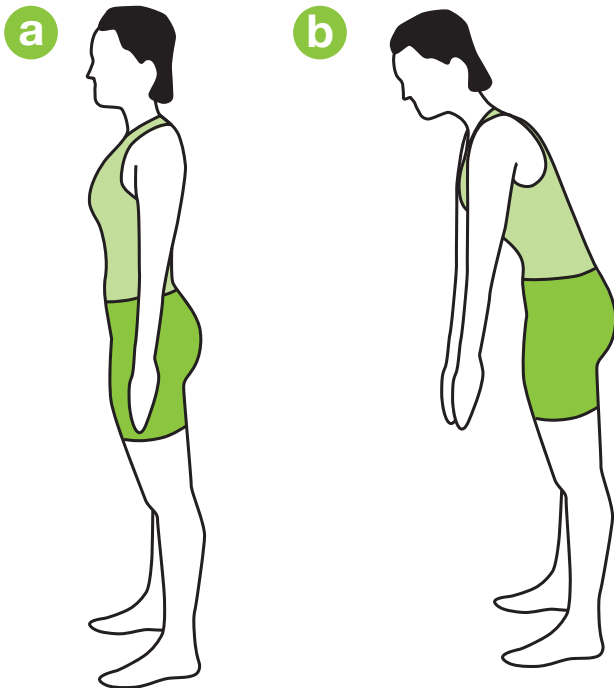
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## Forward Bend: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Stand tall with feet hip distance apart, and spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Maintain a straight back and neutral spine as you bend forward at the hips, allowing your pelvis to move backwards. Start with a small movement, and only move as far as a neutral spine allows.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times.

# Core Stability Exercises

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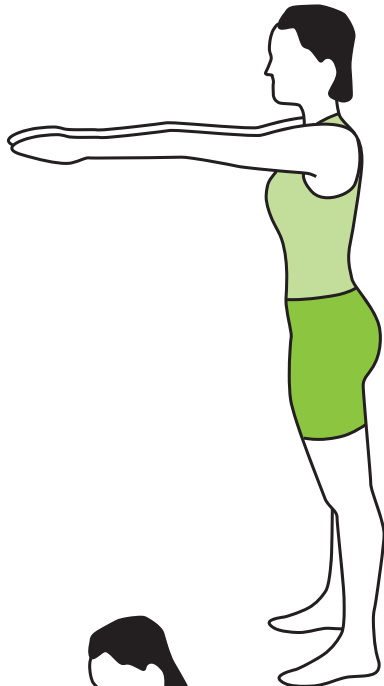
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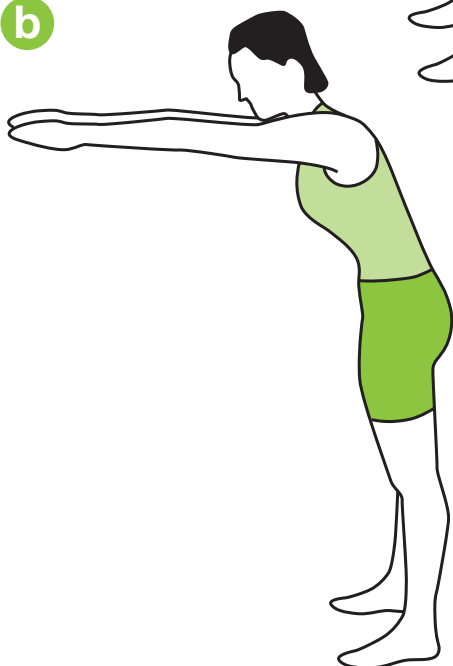
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**a**



**b**



## Forward Bend: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Stand tall with feet hip distance apart, and spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles. Maintaining a neutral spine, lift your arms in front to shoulder height.
- b** Maintain a straight back and neutral spine as you bend forward at the hips, allowing your pelvis to move backwards. Start with a small movement, and only move as far as a neutral spine allows.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times.

# Core Stability Exercises

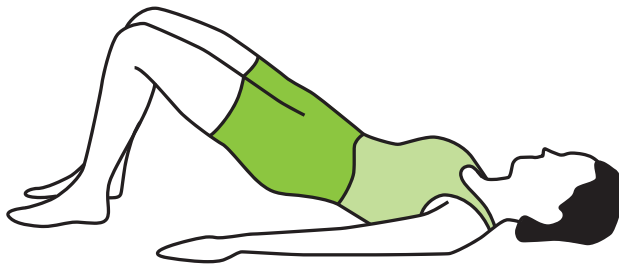
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## Bridge: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

Lie on your back with your knees bent up, your feet flat on the floor hip distance apart, and arms by your sides.

Tilt your pelvis back gently by curling your lower back into the floor and curling your tailbone upwards. Lift your bottom and spine off the mat, gradually, bone by bone, until you are resting on your shoulder blades. Do not let your pelvis rock from side to side.

Hold, and then lower slowly, bone by bone, to the starting position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times.

# Core Stability Exercises

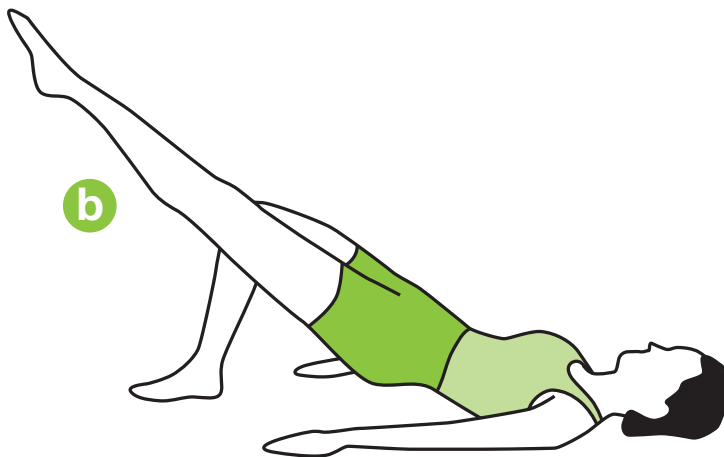
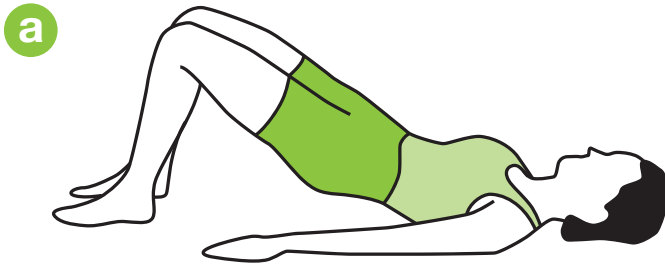
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## Bridge: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

Lie on your back with your knees bent up, your feet flat on the floor hip distance apart, and arms by your sides.

- a** Tilt your pelvis back gently by curling your lower back into the floor and curling your tailbone upwards. Lift your bottom and spine off the mat, gradually, bone by bone, until you are resting on your shoulder blades. Do not let your pelvis rock from side to side.
- b** Lift one foot forwards stretching it straight out in front. Do not let your pelvis rock from side to side.

Hold, and then return your foot to the starting position on the floor. Lower your spine slowly, bone by bone, to the starting position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

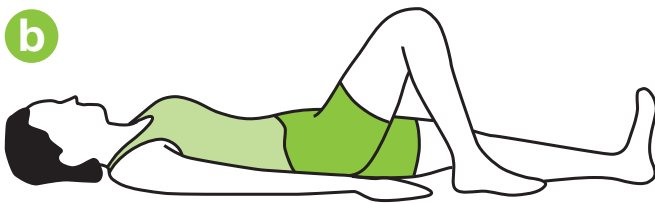
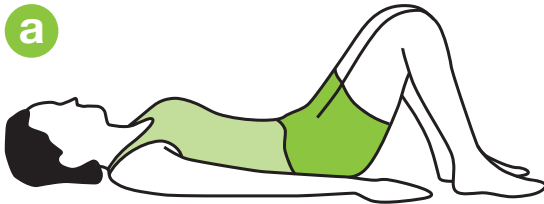
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## One Leg Stretch: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your back with knees bent up, feet flat on the floor hip distance apart, arms by your sides, spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Slowly slide one heel forward to straighten your leg. Only move as far as a neutral spine allows. Do not let your pelvis twist.

Return slowly to the start position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

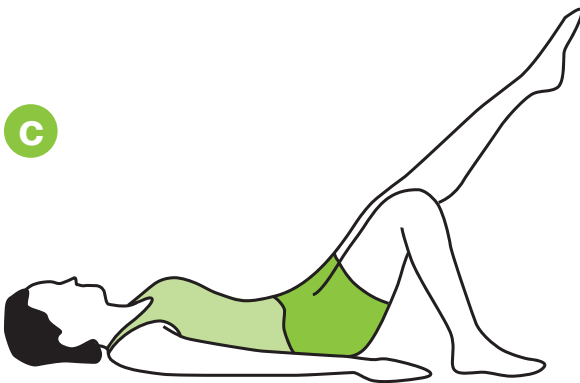
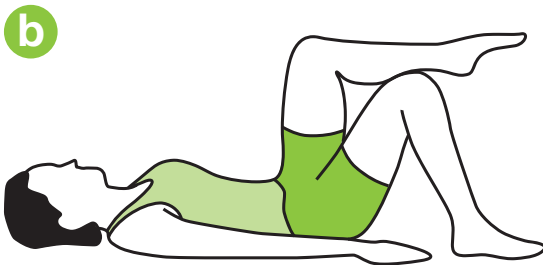
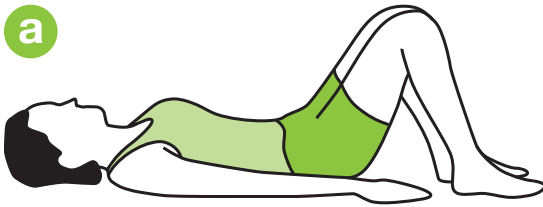
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## One Leg Stretch: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your back with knees bent up, feet flat on the floor hip distance apart, arms by your sides, spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Lift one foot off the floor and bring the knee over the hip so that the hip and knee are bent to 90 degrees.
- c** Straighten this leg out in a diagonal line until your thighs are level with each other. Only move as far as a neutral spine allows. Do not let your spine twist.

Return the leg to the start position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

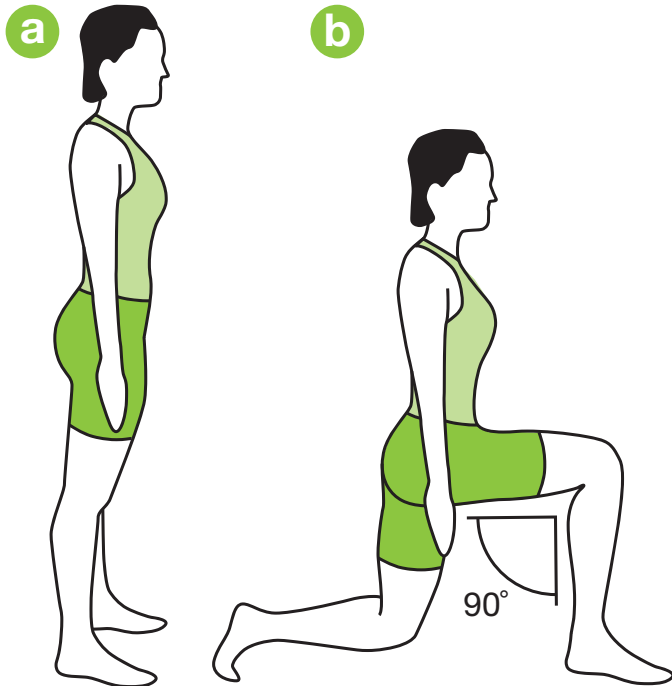
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## Backward Lunge: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

For this exercise ensure that you hold onto the back of a chair if necessary.

- a** Stand tall with feet hip width apart, spine in neutral, and core muscles engaged.
- b** Take a step backwards, bending the front knee to a maximum of 90 degrees. Your front knee should be directly above your foot. The back knee may be close to the floor, with the back heel raised. Only move as far as a neutral spine allows.

Push off the back leg and return to the standing position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.



# Core Stability Exercises

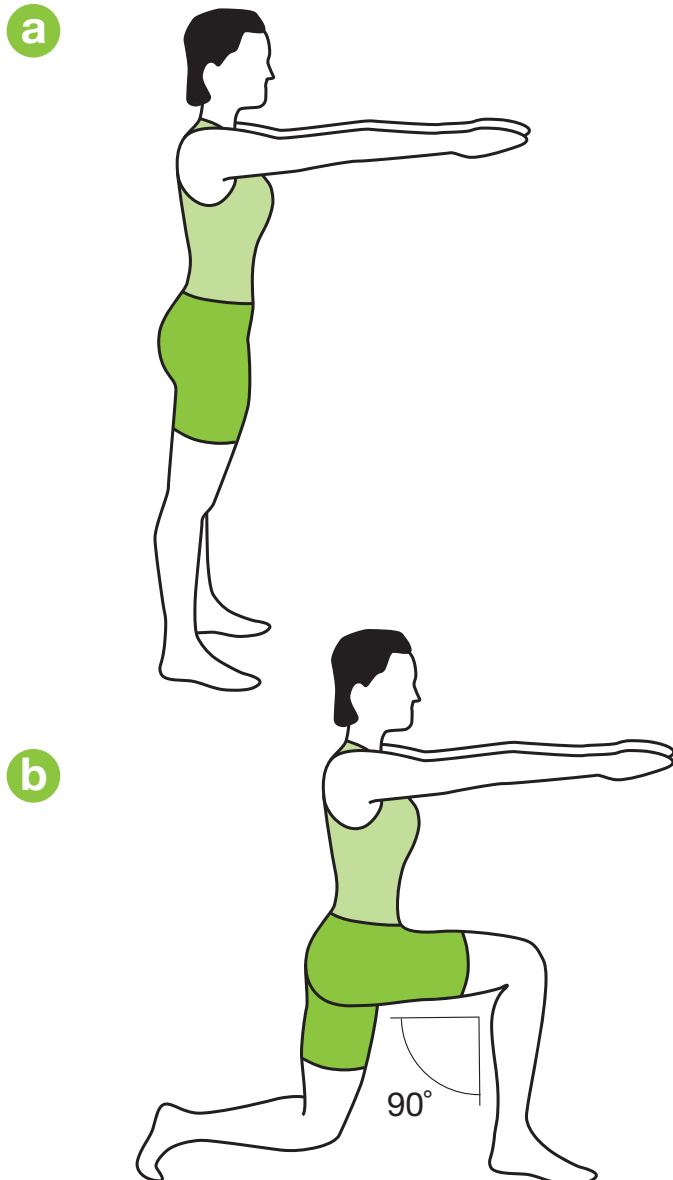
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## Backward Lunge: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Stand tall with feet hip width apart, spine in neutral, and core muscles engaged. Maintaining a neutral spine, lift your arms in front to shoulder height.
- b** Take a step backward, bending the front knee to a maximum of 90 degrees. Your front knee should be directly above your foot. The back knee may be close to the floor, with the back heel raised. Only move as far as a neutral spine allows.

Push off the back leg and return to the standing position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

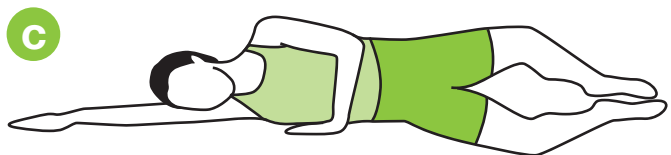
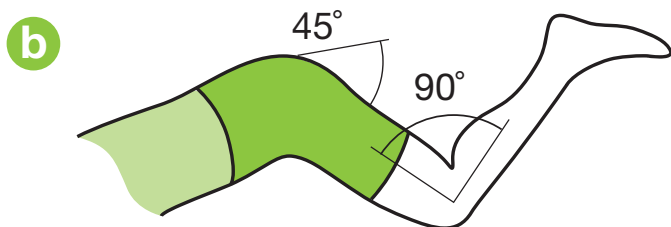
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## Bent Leg Side Lifts: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your side, with your head resting on your lower arm, lower arm stretched straight up in line with your trunk, top hand on the floor in front. (Your therapist will advise whether you need a folded towel between your head and arm, and will advise when you can take your top hand off the floor).
- b** Bend your hips to 45 degrees and your knees to 90 degrees. Ensure that your spine is in neutral, your upper shoulder is directly above your lower shoulder, and your upper hip directly above your lower hip. Engage your core muscles.
- c** Lift your top knee keeping your heels together. Do not let your pelvis twist. Only move as far as a stable, neutral spine allows. Hold, and then lower.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

To exercise the other leg, lie on your other side and repeat the exercise.

# Core Stability Exercises

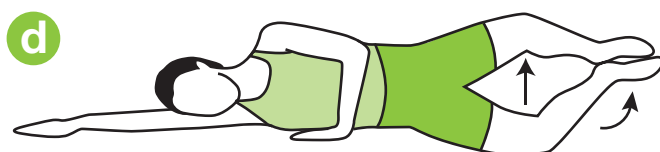
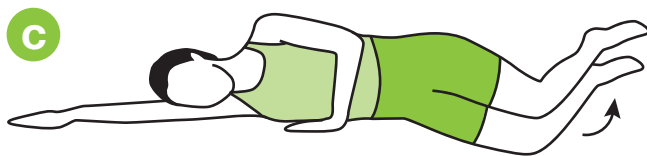
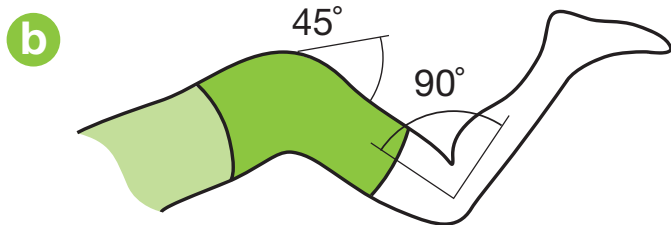
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## Bent Leg Side Lifts: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- Lie on your side. Rest head on lower arm, lower arm stretched straight up in line with your trunk. (Your therapist will advise whether to have a folded towel between your head and arm, and whether to have your top hand on the floor in front).
- Bend hips and knees as shown. Ensure spine is in neutral, with upper shoulder directly above lower shoulder, and upper hip directly above lower hip. Engage your core muscles.
- Lift both feet up about 8 inches, together.
- Lift top knee keeping heels together in the raised position. Do not let pelvis twist. Only move as far as a stable, neutral spine allows. Hold, and then lower top knee maintaining heels in the raised position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

To exercise the other leg, lie on your other side and repeat the exercise.

# Core Stability Exercises

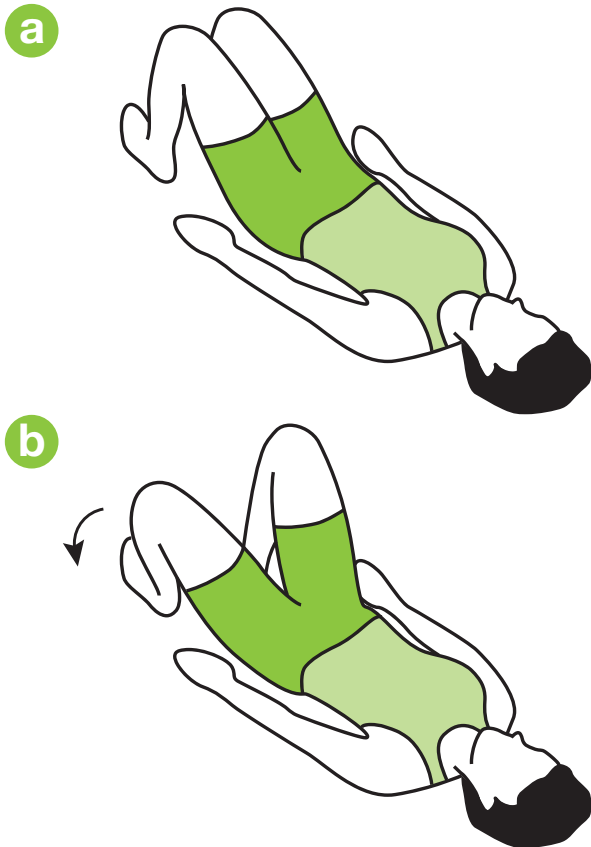
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## Single Leg Drop Out: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your back with knees bent up, feet flat on the floor hip distance apart, arms by your sides, spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Slowly roll one leg outwards. Only move as far as a neutral spine allows. Do not let your pelvis twist.

Then return to the start position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

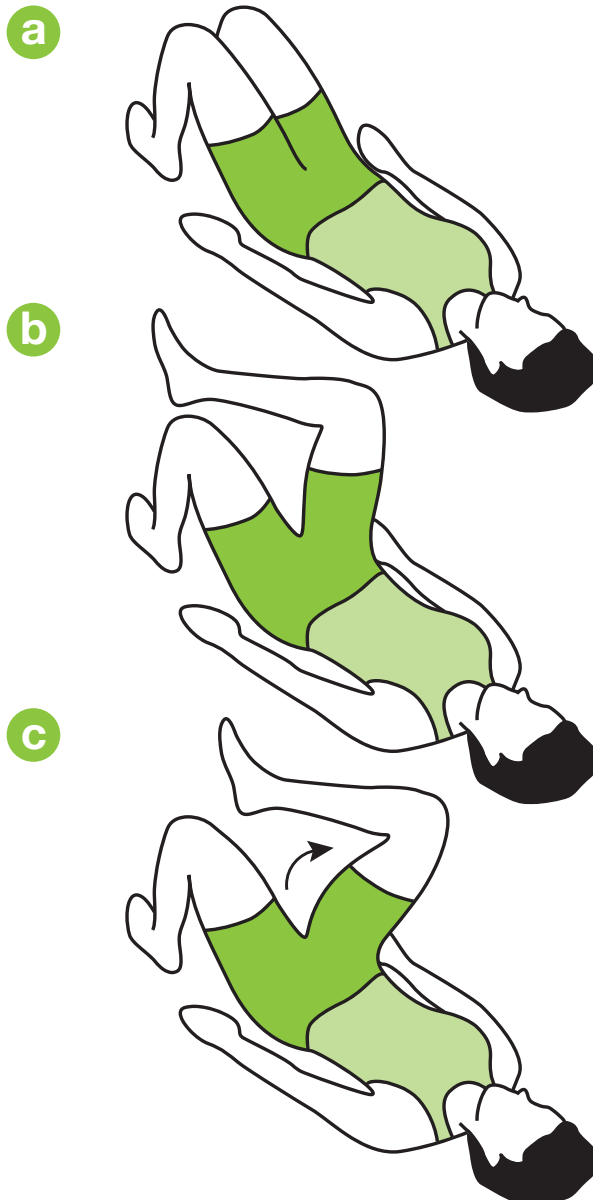
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## Single Leg Drop Out: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your back with knees bent up, feet flat on the floor hip distance apart, arms by your sides, spine in neutral. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Lift one foot off the floor and bring the knee over the hip so that the hip and knee are bent to 90 degrees.
- c** Slowly roll this leg outwards. Only move as far as a neutral spine allows. Do not let your pelvis twist.

Then return to the start position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

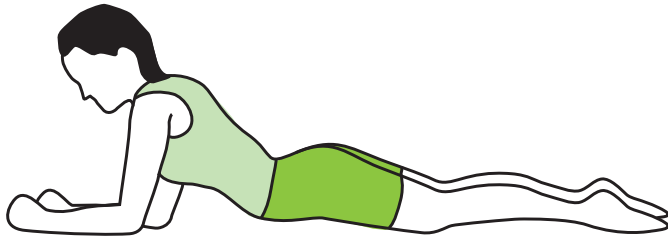
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## Horizontal Hold: Base Level

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise

Lie face down, chest raised, forearms on the floor with elbows directly below your shoulders. Engage your core muscles.

Lift your tummy away from the floor keeping your spine long and the pubic bone pressed into the floor. Hold, and then relax back to start position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times.

# Core Stability Exercises

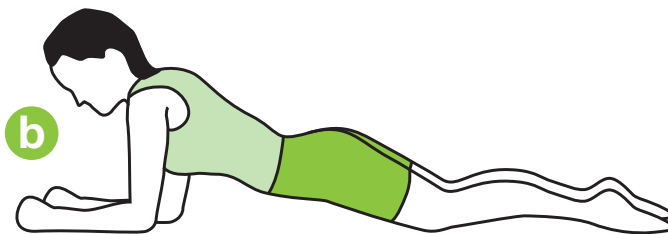
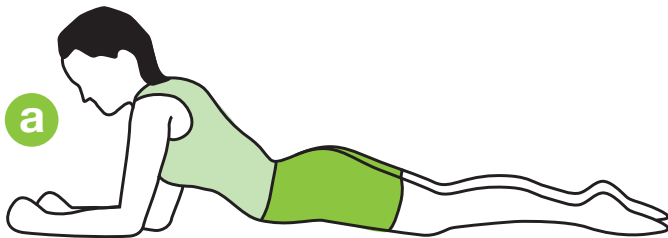
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## Horizontal Hold: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie face down, chest raised, forearms on the floor with elbows directly below your shoulders. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Lift your tummy away from the floor keeping your spine long and your pubic bone pressed into the floor. Then lift your hips off the floor so that your weight is on your knees. Maintain a neutral spine. Hold, and then relax back to start position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times.

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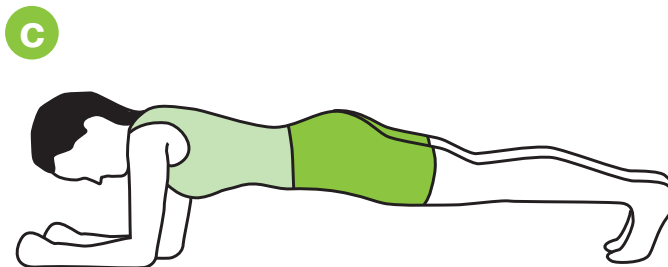
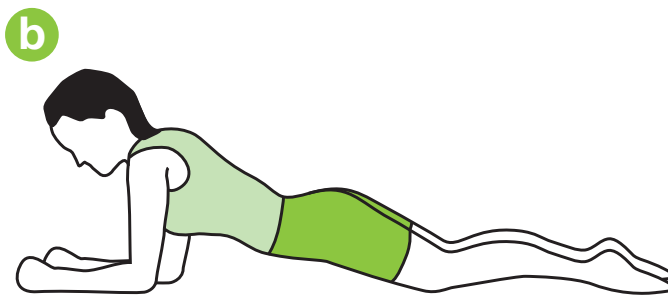
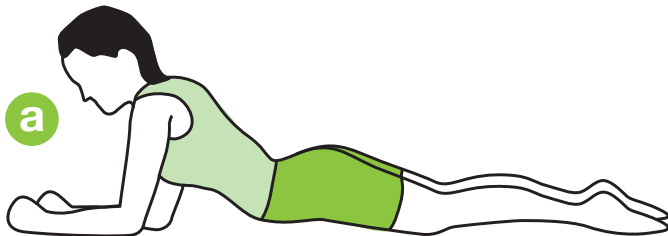
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## Horizontal Hold: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie face down, chest raised, forearms on floor with elbows directly below shoulders. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Lift your tummy away from the floor keeping your spine long and your pubic bone pressed into the floor. Then lift your hips off the floor so that your weight is on your knees.
- c** Curl your toes under and straighten both legs. Maintain a neutral spine. Hold, and then relax back to start position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times.



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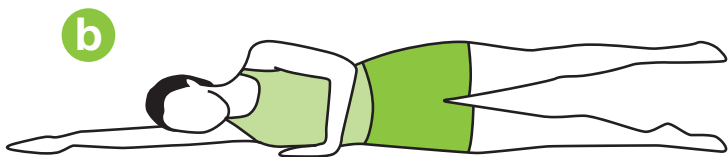
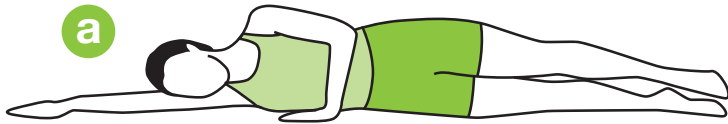
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## Straight Leg Side Lifts: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your side, with your body in a straight line, head resting on your lower arm, lower arm stretched straight up in line with your trunk, top hand on the floor in front. (Your therapist will advise whether you need a folded towel between your head and arm, and will advise when you can take your top hand off the floor). Ensure that your spine is in neutral, your upper shoulder is directly above your lower shoulder, and your upper hip directly above your lower hip. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Lift the top leg up to hip height. Hold, and then lower to the start position.

To exercise the other leg, lie on your other side and repeat the exercise.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

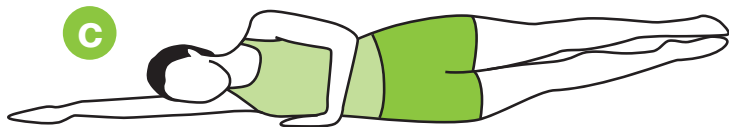
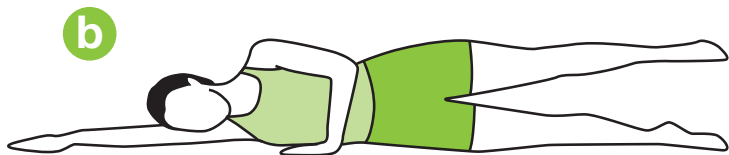
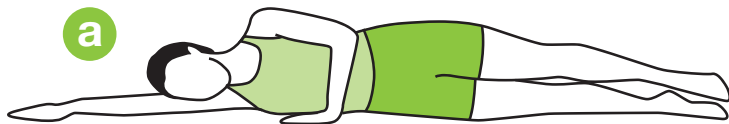
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## Straight Leg Side Lifts: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your side, with your body in a straight line, head resting on your lower arm, lower arm stretched straight up in line with your trunk, top hand on the floor in front. (Your therapist will advise whether you need a folded towel between your head and arm, and will advise when you can take your top hand off the floor). Ensure that your spine is in neutral, your upper shoulder is directly above your lower shoulder, and your upper hip directly above your lower hip. Engage your core muscles.
- b** Lift the top leg up to hip height.
- c** Lift the lower leg to meet the top leg. Hold, and then lower both legs to the mat.

To exercise the other leg, lie on your other side and repeat the exercise.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

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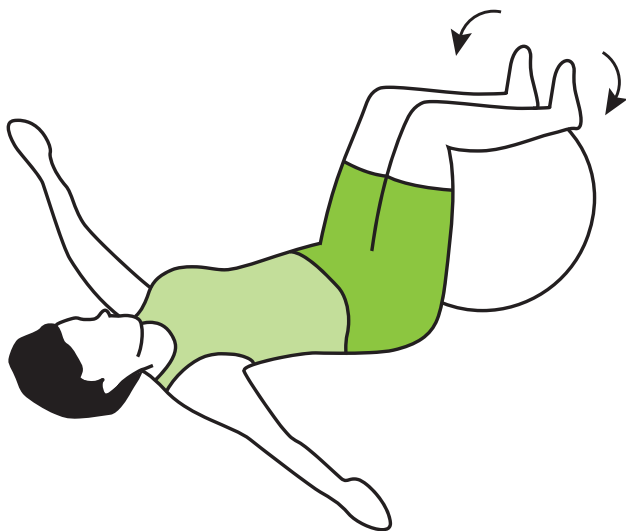
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## Knee Rolling on Gym Ball

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

Lie on your back with your legs supported on a gym ball, knees and feet hip distance apart and arms stretched out to each side. Ensure that your spine is in neutral. Engage your core muscles.

Gently roll the gym ball from side to side.

Repeat ..... times.

# Core Stability Exercises

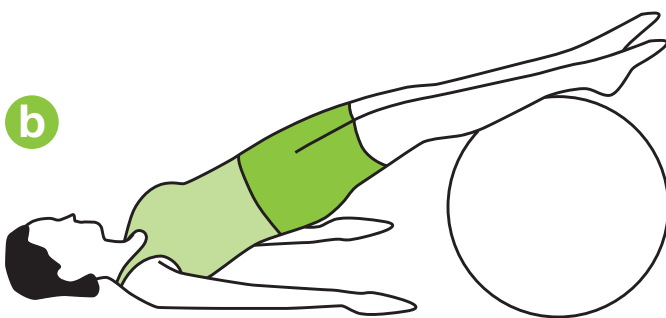
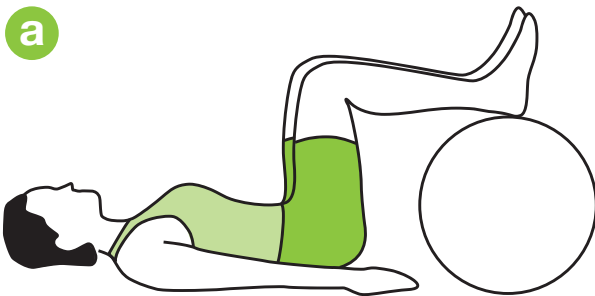
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## Bridging on Gym Ball: Level 1

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your back with your knees bent up, feet supported on a gym ball, hip distance apart, and arms by your sides. Your therapist will advise whether you should place a rolled towel around the base of the ball.
- b** Tilt your pelvis back gently by curling your lower back into the floor and curling your tailbone upwards. Lift your bottom and spine off the mat, gradually, bone by bone, slowly straightening your legs as you lift, until you are resting on your shoulder blades. Do not let your pelvis rock from side to side.

Hold, and then lower slowly, bone by bone, to the starting position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times.

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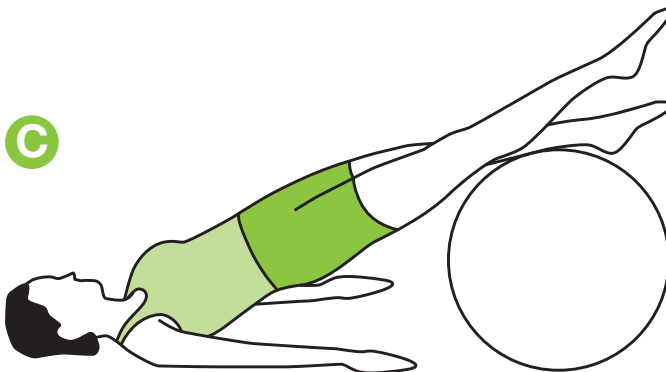
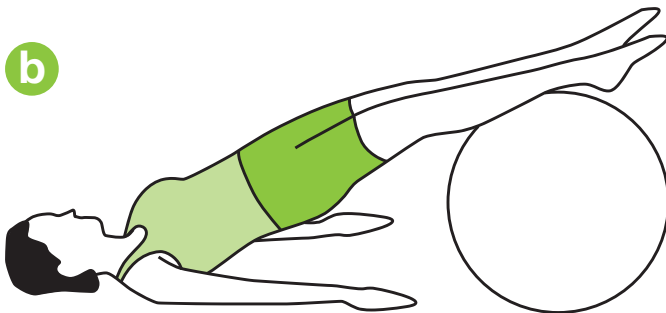
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## Bridging on Gym Ball: Level 2

Remember to only progress to this exercise if you can maintain a neutral spine and engage your core muscles. If you cannot do that, please go back to the Table Top base level exercise.

- a** Lie on your back with your knees bent up, feet supported on a gym ball, hip distance apart, and arms by your sides. Your therapist will advise whether you should place a rolled towel around the base of the ball.
- b** Tilt your pelvis back gently by curling your lower back into the floor and curling your tailbone upwards. Lift your bottom and spine off the mat, gradually, bone by bone, straightening your legs as you lift, until you are resting on your shoulder blades. Do not let your pelvis rock from side to side.
- c** Lift one leg off the gym ball, while maintaining a steady stable pelvis and neutral spine.

Hold, and then lower slowly, bone by bone, to the starting position.

Hold for ..... seconds.

Repeat ..... times with right leg.

Repeat ..... times with left leg.

# Core Stability Exercises

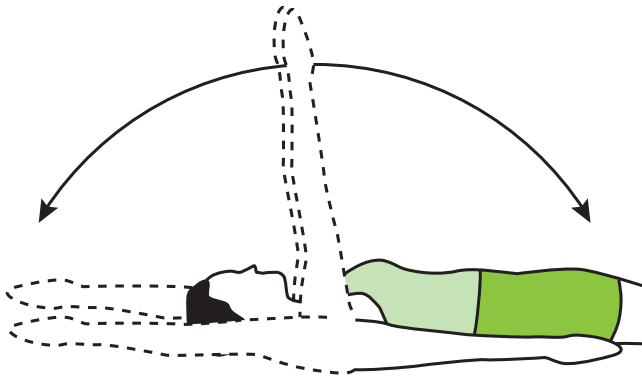
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## Arm Lifts

While holding the exercise position, lift your arms slowly up in front of you and over your head, keeping them long and straight. Then take your arms slowly back to the start position.

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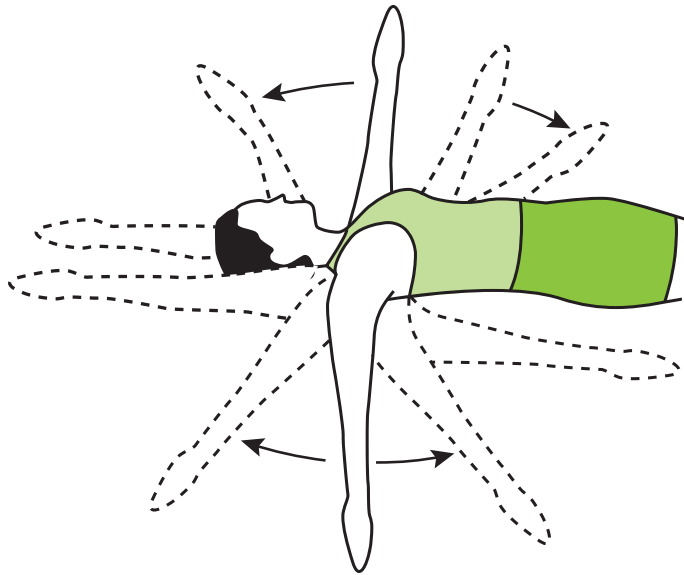
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## Arm Sweeps

While holding the exercise position, sweep your arms slowly out to the side and up above your head, keeping them long and straight, just off the ground. Then take your arms back to the start position.

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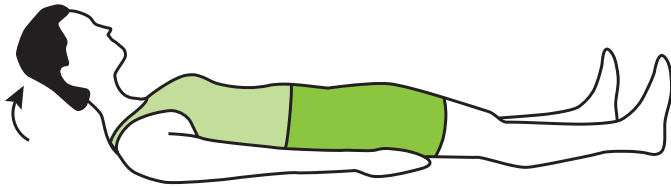
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## Head Lifts

While holding the exercise position, lift your head off the mat, keeping your chin gently tucked in, then lower slowly to the start position.