

HOW TO ACTIVATE YOUR CORE MUSCLES



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Let's talk about how to activate your deep abdominals (core muscles) correctly.

So what are core muscles? We have our diaphragm (our breathing muscles) that sit at the very top of the rib cage.

We have the pelvic floor muscles, a hammock like collection of muscles that run from the pubis at the front, to the two sit bones (the ischial tuberosity) at the sides and your tailbone or coccyx the back. So it looks like a diamond.



[Watch this video by the same title under the video tab to see Ginera demonstrate this technique/exercise first hand.]



Then we have transverse abdominis, our deep abdominal muscle that runs between the rib cage and the pelvis, which functions like a corset.

Then you've got multifidus the deep spinal muscles that runs the entire length of the spine and also the bulk of the fibres are laying over your sacrum.

So the pelvic floor, transverse abdominus and multifidus function together to support and stabilise the spine.



This is really important to know. These muscles collectively function to support the pelvis and the spine before the limbs move or the anticipation of moment.

When we have lower back pain, there is a delay of this anticipated response and if this dysfunction is not corrected, it can hang around long after a person's pain has gone, potentially increasing the risk of injury.

A key point about core training is that you can't strength a muscle that the nervous system is not communicating to. You need to learn how to activate it before you strengthen it.



So How Do We Activate These Muscles?

There are a lots of different cues out there, you've got to pick one that works for you. These are the ones that work for me: I think about a piece of string.

When I talk about activating pelvic floor muscles, I think about the string being connected to the pubis at the front, the two sit bones at the side, and the coccyx or tailbone the back. So I put that picture of a diamond into my clients mind and get them to imagine the drawstring that is connected to shorten and then draw it up. That is the pelvic floor cue.



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Imagine there is a drawstring connecting the inside the front hip bones, then draw the muscles in to shorten the distance between that drawstring.

Put the L of your hand on the top of your pelvis, then trace that L down towards your spine, you will feel two receptacle bony landmarks. Now think about a piece of string drawing in between these two bones.



Another cue is, without moving your body, imagine you are arching your back, right up into your neck without moving it.

The key points when you use these cues is less is more and think more than do. So literally you want to be thinking about the cues. (The strings drawing in, more than actually doing it). So you shouldn't feel any muscles bulging under your fingers.

If anything, it's a very slight, drawing away from your fingers and you will probably feel more when you let go.



[Watch this video by the same title under the Video tab to see Ginera demonstrate this technique/exercise first hand.]

It is a 10 to 15% maximum voluntary contraction. So it is light, it is small and the movements are quiet. So picture your cue, pick an area that you want to activate, think more than do, quietly, softly, lightly.

This Ebook is a collaboration between Ginera Linton-Ozich, Trainer at vitalityhealthsolutions & Global Healing Exchange

