Move of the Month

[et_pb_section transparent_background=”off” background_color=”#474747″ allow_player_pause=”off” inner_shadow=”off” parallax=”off” parallax_method=”off” padding_mobile=”off” make_fullwidth=”off” use_custom_width=”off” width_unit=”on” make_equal=”off” use_custom_gutter=”off”][et_pb_row][et_pb_column type=”4_4″][et_pb_accordion admin_label=”Accordion – Moves of the Month” use_border_color=”off” border_color=”#ffffff” border_style=”solid”] [et_pb_accordion_item title=”Move of the Month”] [/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title=”Floor Sitting- February 2015″]

For this month, we are going to challenge you to spend 30 minutes each day sitting on the floor. Now sitting on the floor for 30 minutes each day sounds like a lot of time. However, with the average American spending 5 hours a day watching television, there is plenty of time to “practice” floor sitting. What can you gain from sitting on the floor? The answer is improved flexibility in the hips and pelvis. Sitting on the floor seems like such a trivial thing, but as we age it becomes harder and harder to do comfortably. This is because we tend to spend less time sitting on the floor and more time in chairs and on sofas. What’s more, the greater your need to use your hands and knees to get up from the floor, the higher your risk of dying from all causes. So whether you’re reading, watching TV, eating, or having a

conversation, spend some time on the floor to improve your mobility.

At first, you may be too stiff in your hips to sit comfortably for any period of time. If that is the case, try sitting on a few pillows or folded up blankets. As your hips loosen up over time, you can take a pillow or two away.

Below is an illustration from anthropologist Gordon Hewes that shows how different people rest from around the world. Mix up some of the postures during your 30 minutes each day to work on your mobility in different ways.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Cossack Squat- December 2014″]

The Cossack Squat is a great exercise for building strength and flexibility in the hips and adductor muscles. It is a good exercise to work into your warm-up routine prior to working out.

Start with your feet about 2 ½ times the width of your shoulder with your toes pointed outwards and your knees in line with them.

Begin by squatting toward your right side. Slowly move your weight onto your right leg until your left leg is straight, resting only on its heel. Next, slowly shift your weight back to your center and then onto your left leg, repeating the movement. Perform 2-3 sets of 6-12 repetitions on each leg. You will notice that at first you may not be able to go down very far. Just start where you are and try to get a little bit farther with each rep.

Do not lean your body too far forward as this places added stress on the knees. Instead, sit back and use your hips to handle most of the work.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title=”Progressive Wrist Stretch- April 2014″]

These exercises will help improve flexibility of the muscles and tendons of the forearm and help prevent injury.

THE MOVE

1 Start in a kneeling position with the toes stretched back (doubles as a stretch to the plantar fascia).

2 With the elbows straight place the palms on the floor with the fingers pointed out to the side.

3 Keeping the elbows straight throughout, press through the palm of the hand and fingers and gently sit back towards your heels.

4 Gently rock back forward and repeat for 10 repetitions.

5 For the second set try rotating your hands back towards you knees (about 30-60 degrees) and perform 10 more reps.

6 On the third set, try to have the hands rotated about 60-90 degrees from the original position, and then perform 10 more repetitions.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title=”Short Foot – January 2014″]

THE MOVE

- Sit with good posture in a sturdy chair with both feet on the floor, your toes facing straight forward, and your knees bent to 90 degrees.
- Inhale, contract the muscles on the bottom of your right foot and lower legs to raise the arch of your foot without curling your toes. This position is called the short foot position. Hold this isometric muscle contraction for six seconds, then exhale and relax.

- Turn your lower leg slightly outward, inhale and again come to the short foot position. Hold for six seconds, exhale and relax.
- Next turn your lower leg inward, and perform another short foot position for six seconds.
- Repeat the identical series of exercises with your left foot.
- Reposition your feet an inch farther away from the chair, and perform repetitions in the straight, outward and inward ankle positions with both feet. After each series, inch your foot forward until you perform a total of five series with each foot. Sliding your feet farther away from the chair each rep works the muscles at slightly different angles.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Band Pull Apart – November 2013″]

The band pull-apart exercise improves shoulder function, posture and strengthen the upper back musculature (posterior delts). By adding the Band Pull-Apart to your regular stretching routine, you'll notice improved strength and mobility in just a few days and significant improvement in your overall shoulder health after a few weeks.

THE MOVE

- Begin with your arms extended straight out in front of you, holding the band with both hands.
- Start the movement by moving your hands out laterally to your sides. Keep your elbows straight as you perform the entire movement.
- Bring the band to your chest. Then pinch your shoulder blades down and back at the very end of the exercise.
- Pause momentarily and return to the starting position under control.
- Depending on the resistance of the band, perform 2-3 sets of 10-20 repetitions.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Goblet Squat – September 2013"]

Squatting is a basic human movement. It is also a movement that most Americans cannot perform properly or with ease. To be able to perform a full, deep squat, a lot of things have to happen. The ankles have to be mobile enough to allow the knee to travel out and over the toes. The thigh muscles have to be strong to move and stabilize the knees and hips. Your hips need to be mobile enough to prevent rounded of the low back at the bottom. And you need core and back strength to maintain a neutral spine throughout the squat.

THE MOVE

The goblet squat is an easy way to improve your ability to squat. Try performing this movement daily and reassess after a month and see how much stronger and easier it is to do. You can do one quick set during your lunch break or add 2-3 sets into your workouts. The idea is to be constantly developing the squat as a skill. Your hips, knees, and back will end up healthier for it.

The Goblet Squat

- Hold the dumbbell or kettlebell high against the chest
- Keep your chest up
- Have your feet slightly wider than shoulder width
- Feet can be turned out 0-30 degrees
- Sink down into the squat
- Drive your knee out while the elbows track inside of the knees
- Drive back up pushing through the heels
- Keep the chest up

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Negative Chin Up – July 2013"]

You can improve your shoulder mobility while adding upper body strength by doing one move – the Negative Chin-up. Performing

slow negatives are a great way to build flexibility along with strength in the body's tendons. A negative is the lowering portion of an exercise. For the chin-up, the negative is the lowering of your body towards the ground.

THE MOVE

There are two ways you can start depending on your initial strength. As a beginner, use a plyometric box to allow you to reach the top position (first image). For the more advanced, jump up and grab the bar. Now with your chin above the bar, slowly lower your body until you are hanging from the bar with your arms locked-out, taking eight to 10 seconds complete the movement. Perform 2-3 sets of 8-10 reps.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Heel Walks – June 2013″]

Doing heel walks will help strengthen the tibialis anterior, the muscle that is located in the front of the shin. The primary action of the tibialis anterior is to flex the foot upward while maintaining the heel on the ground. For people who have high arches in their feet this muscle is often weak and will lead to plantar fasciitis. Strengthening this muscle is a great way to prevent and reduce the symptoms of plantar fasciitis, such as inflammation. One way to strengthen the muscle is to walk on your heels.

THE MOVE

To perform Heel Walks:

- Stand on your heels with your toes as high as possible
- Walk for 30 seconds.
- Rest and repeat 3 times.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Prayer Stretch – March 2013″]

This stretch is great for people that have kyphosis (rounded spine) in their upper thoracic region and is beneficial for yogi’s trying to correct their posture. This move will increase mobility in the thoracic spine as well as stretch the latissimus dorsi muscles; a group of muscles along the posterior lateral part of the trunk, that if tight can restrict overhead activities.

THE MOVE

Start off on your knees with the roller in front of you. Place your hands together on the roller and, while keeping your chest up as much as possible, push your arms forward to let the foam roll underneath your arm towards your body. As you’re rolling the foam out, you should get a nice stretch in your lats. Come back to the starting position and repeat for the necessary amount of repetitions (usually two or three sets of 10 to 12 reps works well).

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title=”Stir The Pot – February 2013″]

This exercise helps to improve core stability that is essential to transferring power generated in the lower body to the upper body. The exercise is a spine sparing activity. Spine Sparing refers to movements and strategies that decrease a load on the spine, which will reduce disc herniations.

THE MOVE

To start, assume a plank position with your forearms on a Swiss ball. Make sure there is space between your chest and your forearms. Your arm and forearm should be about a 90 degree angle.

Use your forearms to move the ball in small circles while

keeping the rest of your body in the original position.

Do 10 circles to the left and then 10 to the right. That's 1 set. Do 3 sets. Make sure you brace your core and glutes throughout the movement.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Core and Shoulder Stability – January 2013″]

Stability ball walk-outs is a great exercise for **core and shoulder stability**, as well it is beneficial exercise to increase scapular stability for smooth shoulder mobility. This exercise helps to reduce shoulder injuries by increase strength and is especially good for athletes who play paddle sports.

THE MOVE

Step 1: To start lie on your stomach over the top of a stability ball. Begin on an all fours position with your torso on the ball and hands and feet on the floor. Lengthen your legs and stretch your heels to the back of the room. Your feet should be off the ground and your hands should be directly under your shoulder.

Step 2: With your abdominals engaged and torso rigid, slowly walk your hands forward. Avoid allowing your legs to droop. Continue walking out until the fronts of your thighs or knees are resting on the top of the ball. The further you walk away from the ball, the greater the stability challenge. Go slowly and find the challenge that is right for you.

Step 3: Slowly walk yourself backwards to your starting position. Try to maintain your stability and balance.

Going forward and back to starting positions is 1 rep. Do 10 reps and 3 sets for a full **core and shoulder stability** workout.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Overhead

Reach – December 2012″]

The human body is designed for movement. Holding any one posture for a prolonged period of time increases stiffness and tension. As a result, sitting is a common cause of low back and neck pain. As a general rule you should avoid sitting for longer than 20 minutes without getting up. Sitting for longer than that you begin to accumulate stiffness in your tissues that will have to be paid???. The exercise shown below is a 'micro-break' which you can perform to erase that stiffness. Getting up every 20–30 minutes will reduce the amount of time you take for a long 'micro-break'.

THE MOVE

Start with with your feet shoulder width apart. Gently raise your arms overhead. Take a deep breath in, through your nose, and hold the breath. Reach your arms up to the ceiling as high as possible without letting your breath go. Make sure to keep your elbows as straight as possible. Then let the breath go as you drop your arms. Do 2-3 reps, every 30 minutes.

Once you make this stretch as part of your regular routine, you will be ready to progress to next step. While reaching for the ceiling with both arms, alternate each arm by reaching further inch by inch. Elbows should be straight. Movement should only be taking place at the shoulder. Torso is elongated in an upright posture. Keep alternating the reaches with each arm for 30 seconds. Do 2-3 sets.

Practice this 30 second move a few times a day to relieve your back and neck stiffness.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Using a Foam Roller – December 2012″]

A foam roller is an effective tool for releasing tension in your connective tissues, working out kinks and knots in sore

muscles and stretching muscles and tendons. By using your own body weight and a cylindrical foam roller you can perform a self-massage, break up trigger points, and soothe tight muscles while increasing blood flow and circulation. Perform the following moves before and after exercising.

THE MOVES

1. Quad Massage

Start with both of your thighs on the roller at the same time. Roll back and forth from your knees to hips. To increase the pressure, lift one thigh off the roller and lean into the roller with the leg on the roller. Roll for 60 seconds.

2. Hamstring Massage

Start with both of your hamstrings on the roller at the same time. Put your hands behind you on the floor for support. Roll back and forth from your knees to hips. To increase the pressure, lift one thigh off the roller and lean into the roller with the leg on the roller. Roll for 60 seconds.

3. IT Band Massage

Lie sideways with the foam roller under the side of your thigh. Roll between your knee and your hip bone. Spend extra time on the more tender areas you encounter. Roll for 60 seconds. Repeat with your other leg.

4. Gluteal Muscle/Piriformis Massage

Sit with your buttocks on top of a foam roll. Bend your knees,

and then cross the right leg so that the right ankle is over the left knee. Shift your weight to your right side, rolling over the buttocks until you feel the tension in your glute. Then repeat on the other side.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Stretches and Exercises for Cyclists and Recreational Riders – December 2012″]

With bike season getting into full gear, try adding these moves into your routine to help keep yourself healthy this summer. These stretches are designed to help with common trouble areas with cyclists and casual riders. Perform these movements before and after your rides and again on your days off.

1. Hamstring

Place the heel of one foot on the seat of a stable chair. While maintaining a flat back, bend forward at the hips as you feel the stretch in the back of leg. Hold the stretch for 30 seconds and then repeat with the other leg.

2. Neck Rolls

From a standing position, pull shoulders down and back. Tuck chin into chest. Keeping chin close to chest, slowly roll neck clockwise in a circular motion. Then roll neck counter-clockwise in a circular motion. Do 5 times.

3. Hip Flexor Stretch

Kneel on one knee. Place front foot 12” in front of back knee. Keep stomach/glute tight as you move front knee over the foot.

Hold for 30 seconds, do 2 times.

4. Piriformis

Lie on back with knees bent. Put left ankle on right quad. With hands on right hamstring, bring your right leg towards you. Hold for 30 seconds. Do 5 times.

5. Cat-Camel Stretch

From kneeling on all fours, place your hands under your shoulders and your knees under your hips. Drop your head, round your back and tuck you pelvis. Hold for 3 seconds and exhale. Extend your head with a tucked chin and fully extend your back. Do 10 sets.

6. Abductor Massage with Foam Roller

Start just below the crease of your hip and roll up & down to your mid (inner) thigh 10-15 times. Then perform 10-15 rolls starting at your mid (inner) thigh and rolling down to the inside of your knee.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Thoracic Mobility – November 2012 "]

Thoracic Spine

The thoracic spine provides a base for many of the neck and shoulder muscles. It also designed to protect many of our vital organs. It has a unique function as the mechanical bellows for our breathing.

This area of the spine allows between 30-40 degrees of flexion, 20-25 degrees of extension, 30 degrees of rotation

and 25 degrees of lateral bending. Thoracic mobility and posture plays an important role in neck and shoulder health. Thoracic pain is often less dramatic than neck pain, yet just as common.

Thoracic Extension

- Proper thoracic extension allows for better positioning of the shoulder blade.
- Better upper thoracic mobility takes stress off of the neck.

THE MOVE

Begin on all fours with your hands under your shoulders and your knees under your hips. Place one hand behind your head, and bring that elbow to your opposite forearm. From there you will rotate your torso while bringing your elbow as high as you can. Follow the elbow with your eyes, but be careful not to twist your neck. Repeat this motion for ten repetitions and switch sides. Perform 2-3 sets daily or as a part of your warm-up.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Working Your Glutes – October 2012 "]

Use the Single Leg Glute Bridge with Shoulders Elevated, an advanced version of the single-leg bridge to improve hip extension and glute strength.

THE MOVE

Start with your shoulders resting on the bench supporting your body. Raise your right leg off of the ground and start with your hips up in a level bridge. Drop your hips until you are nearly sitting down. Raise your body back up as high as you

can and fully contract your buttocks at the top of the motion. Lower your body back down into the seated position and repeat action. Do 3 sets of 8-12 reps. Repeat with left leg raised.

Use this advanced version of the single-leg bridge to improve hip extension and glute strength.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Strengthening Your Feet – September 2012″]

In the past couple years the "barefoot" training movement has exploded. A majority of the shoe companies today have minimalistic or "barefoot" products. It comes from the idea that we are not meant to wear shoes all day, every day, from the time when we start to walk. The modern, Westernized shoe wearer tends to have weak and limited use of their feet compared to people and cultures that tend to go barefoot. We see dramatically higher rates of bunions, plantar fasciitis, sprained ankles and a host of other conditions of the feet and ankles. Shoes essentially give the muscles, tendons, ligaments, and joints of our feet a break. Imagine if you wore mittens on your hands all day and every day since infancy. You probably wouldn't have half the fine motor skills you possess today. Looking at the feet, most people can't even move their pinkie toes independently, an ability barefoot people acquire early and naturally.

Most sports and everyday activities require contact with the ground and our feet are the first link in the kinetic chain. If the foot is not able to fully handle the forces required of it, overtime different structures will be stressed and start to cause issues. The exercise below is designed to strengthen a muscle called your quadratus plantae.

THE MOVE

The quadratus plantae is the muscle that lies underneath the

plantar fascia and can provide strength and support to the foot when strong and conditioned. It also can aid by increasing blood flow to the bottom of the foot which can help in removing metabolic wastes that accumulate in conditions such as plantar fasciitis.
Begin by simultaneously drawing the top of the foot towards your shin (dorsiflexion) while flexing your toes down (like you're trying to grip something.

Then flex the top of the foot away (plantar flexion) while simultaneously pulling the toes back and outwards.

Repeat as many times as you can and then switch feet. When first learning this exercise, it is common to have the foot feel like it wants to cramp. You may also find it difficult to perform the movement. This is from the weakness of the foot muscles. Keep working on the movement and try adding reps each day. Perform one set of maximum repetitions and build up to 50 repetitions.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Thoracic Spine Stretches – July 2012″]

THE MOVES

Pain in the thoracic spine is a very common complaint. However, issues with the midback tend to be less severe than neck, shoulder and low back pain and it often receives less attention than it deserves. Mobility and posture issues with the thoracic spine can contribute to low back pain along with neck and shoulder problems. The truth is, as a whole, our society is spending more and more time sitting than our bodies were intended to. The following exercises are designed to help with posture and to give the thoracic spine more mobility.

1. Foam Roll for Thoracic Spine Extension

Place the round foam roll horizontally on the floor just below your shoulder blades. Support your head in your hands and lay back over the foam roll and keep your knees bent. Next, roll your spine backwards over the foam roll. You can slightly lift your hips and pelvis off the floor. Avoid letting your head fall back too far. Perform for about 30 seconds. Repeat 2 times per day.

2. Quadruped Extension and Rotation

Start on your hands and knees. Place your left hand on the back of your head. Then touch your left elbow to your right forearm. Next, bring the left elbow back and behind you as you rotate and extend through your upper back. Try pulling your left shoulder blade towards your spine as you lift the elbow up. Perform ten repetitions on each side.

3. Foam Roller

This exercise will have the biggest effect if done consistently. Sit back on the foam roll place vertically under the full length of your back. Have your head and neck supported on roll. Bend your knees with your feet on the floor. Start with your arms at your sides and then progressively raise them overhead over the course of 15 minutes. This exercise takes considerable time, but your posture can greatly benefit from it.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Stretches and Exercises for Runners – June 2012″]

THE MOVES

Whether you are an avid runner or a seasonal runner, these stretches will help stretch and strengthen areas that tend get tight due to running. Perform these movements after you run

and again on your days off.

1. Ankle and Calf

Place the balls of feet on a step and let the heel of one foot fall towards the ground. Hold for 30 seconds. Do 2 times each calf.

2. Psoas/Hip Flexor Stretch

Stand 6” away from a wall with your back facing the wall. Lean left shin with pointed foot on the wall. Stand tall and keep upper body parallel to the wall. Hold for 30 seconds, do 2 times.

3. Glute Bridge Exercise

Lie on the floor, arms at your sides, knees bent, and heels on the floor (1). Lift your hips with knees, hips, and shoulders forming a straight line (2). Hold 2 seconds, then return to start. Do 10 times.

4. IT Band Massage with Foam Roller

Lie sideways with the foam roller under the side of your thigh. Roll between your knee and your hip bone. Roll for 60 seconds. Repeat with other leg.

5. Glute Medius

Lie on your side. Lean your whole body forward 45 degrees and rotate your top foot so that the toes are touching the heel of

your bottom foot. Lift your heal 4 inches off the ground and then lower back down. Do 25 reps.

6. Quads

Lie on your left side with your left hip flexed and thigh pulled up towards chest. Grab right foot with right hand. Contract your abdominals and pull on foot to feel the stretch in the front of your right thigh. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat with the other leg.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Increasing Hip Mobility – April 2012″]

Often our IT Bands can become tight due to active exercises, such as running, cycling, court sports, and climbing. Follow these exercises to stretch and strengthen your IT Bands.

THE MOVES

#1 – Foam Roll IT Band

Start just below your hip and roll up & down to your mid-(outer) thigh 10-15X, focusing on any tight spots. Then perform 10-15 "rolls" starting at your mid-(outer) thigh and rolling all the way down to the outside of your knee. Again, focus on the tight areas.

#2 – Foam Roll Adductors

Start just below the crease of your hip and roll up & down to your mid (inner) thigh 10-15X, focusing on any tight spots. Then perform 10-15 "rolls" starting at your mid-(inner) thigh and rolling down to the inside of your knee. Again, focus on the tight spots.

#3 – Glute/Piriformis Myofacial release w/ static stretch

Start with using a foam roller. Advanced: use a tennis ball or lacrosse ball.

#4 – Rollovers into “V” sits

Perform 10 reps. Be careful for this is an advanced trainee exercise. If you experience any discomfort with this exercise, discontinue immediately.

#5 – Fire hydrant circles

Start on all fours and circle one leg backwards, to the side, forwards and then back down. Do 10 forward circles and repeat with other leg. Then repeat by starting in the opposite direction. (10 forward circles each leg and then 10 backward circles each way for a total of 40 reps)

#6 – Mountain climbers

Start in a pushup position. Jump your right knee to your chest and landing gently with the balls of your foot. Then in one motion, jump your right foot back while bringing your left knee up towards your chest. Perform 20 with each leg.

#7 – Groiners

 

Starting position is the same as the pushup on your toes. Now jump both legs at the same time and have both feet land next to your hands. When you land, try to have your heels down. Next step is jump the legs back to starting position. Make sure that your core is tight to prevent you lower back caving

in.

Perform 10 reps and hold the last rep for 10 seconds while you press your knees out with your upper arms and allowing your butt to drop down.

#8 – Static hip flexor stretch

Perform 3 sets of 10 seconds each leg. Perform all 3 sets on one leg before moving onto the other leg.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Stretching Your IT Band – March 2012″]

THE MOVES

This month's moves are designed to stretch and strengthen your IT Band (Iliotibial Band) and TFL (Tenor Fasciae Latae). The tensor fasciae latae attaches at the top of the side of the hip bone, traveling down the side of the hip into the iliotibial band which runs down the side of the thigh connecting to the outside of the shin bone.

FOAM ROLL THE IT BAND AND TFL

Start just above your knee and roll up and down to the outside of your hip 10-15 times, focusing on any tight spots. This will help to ease tension out of the lateral quad, IT band and TFL.

IT BAND AND TFL

Start by lying on your side and then gently pull the top ankle back towards your buttocks until you feel a stretch. Slowly

lower this knee to the ground and then place the ankle of the bottom leg on the knee of the top leg. This will help pull the knee towards the ground to stretch the end of the IT band. Do not stretch too hard for you could irritate the area if it is already inflamed. Perform 2 sets of 30 seconds on each side. Be careful to not over extend your low back during this exercise.

STRENGTHENING YOUR IT BAND AND TFL

Researchers have found that distance runners who develop IT Band Syndrome have significantly weaker hip abductors (specifically the gluteus medius and minimus). What's more, improvement in symptoms occurred as the runners increased the strength of these muscles. These important hip abductors function to keep better alignment of the knee and keeping less tension on the IT band. Below are some exercises to incorporate into your training program.

Glute Medius Training – Side-Lying Leg Lift

- Purpose: to strengthen the gluteus medius (side of your butt) in order to help stabilize the knee.
- Lean your whole body forward 45 degrees and rotate your top foot so that the toes are touching the heel of your bottom foot.
- Lift your heel 4-6 inches off the ground and then lower back down.
- Start with 2 sets of 20-25 reps for each leg.
- Work up to 2 sets of 50 reps
- Then add 5 lb. ankle weight

Hamstring Strengthening – Hip Lift

The Hip Lift is a great exercise to isolate and strengthen the

hamstrings. It is also very functional by its nature. It trains the hamstrings to stabilize the knee while extending the hip. The knee will be non-weight bearing during this exercise. This will allow the knee to be spared until the hamstring and the rest of the posterior stabilization mechanism is strengthened.

- Begin by laying on the ground with the knees bent 90 degrees with the feet on a chair.
- Press your heels into the chair, contracting your hamstrings, and lift your hips about four inches off the ground (approximately the size of your fist).
- Next, reverse the motion so that the back returns to the floor. Do not relax completely.
- The pace of the exercise should be two seconds up, one second pause at the top, and two seconds down.

Make sure the feet are pointed up and the knees are shoulder width apart. Perform 2 sets of as many reps as possible. When you are able to do two sets of 30 repetitions, we will switch to using a single-leg for 2 sets of maximum reps.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Myofascial Release with a Lacrosse Ball – February 2012″]

Myofascial Release is a technique that involves applying gentle sustained pressure into the myofascial connective tissue restrictions to eliminate pain and restore motion. A lacrosse ball is a great tool that people can use for self-myofascial release to help improve the quality of their soft-tissues.

THE MOVES

The goal of the moves is to find the tender areas in the muscles then apply firm pressure with the lacrosse ball. Work each tender spot you find for 10-20 seconds each. The exercises (by design) can be somewhat painful. A fair amount of tenderness is needed to affect the tissues, but still use

caution.

THE POSTERIOR HIP

THE HAMSTRINGS

THE POSTERIOR SHOULDER

THE PEC MINOR

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title="Stretching Your Neck – January 2012″]

A sore and stiff neck is a common complaint. Our necks can be strained from poor posture, such as hunching over our computers; a previous injury; or stress alone can cause added tension to our necks. Use these moves to relieve stiffness and muscle tension.

THE MOVES

ANTERIOR AND POSTERIOR NECK

- Start by lifting your head forward towards your chest and hold for 3 seconds.
- Reverse the motion and extend the head back and hold for three seconds.
- Perform 10 repetitions. This should be a gentle motion.

LATERAL NECK

• Start by bringing one ear towards your shoulder and hold for 3 seconds.
• Reverse directions and bring the other ear to the opposite shoulder and hold for 3 seconds.

• Do not let the shoulders rise up towards the ear. Look straight ahead the whole time.
• Perform 10 repetitions.
• As long as it is pain-free you may add slight pressure to increase the stretch.

ROTATION

• Standing with your heels together and arms by your side, inhale and slowly turn your head to the right (gently not forcing it).
• Exhale and slowly turn your head back to the front. Repeat turning to the left side.
• Perform 10 reps on each side.

CERVICAL TRACTION WITH TOWEL ROLL

The goal of this exercise is to help bring the neck muscles into a more neutral state and to promote relaxation of tight and spasmed muscles.

• Start by lying on you back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor.
• Work your shoulder blades toward your spine (scapular retraction). Allow your hands to lay
palms up.
• Place a small, rolled up towel under your neck to create a subtle traction. Do not use too big or too small of a towel. Keep your chin slightly tucked down. If the towel is too big you can always try unrolling part of it.
• Try performing for 10 minutes before bed. This can even be performed throughout the day. As with all of these exercises, stop performing if you feel any pain or if symptoms worsen.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title=”Strengthening Your Hamstring – December 2011″]

For many of us we sit all day causing us to develop underused hamstrings along with weak glutes and
core muscles. This can lead to muscle imbalances, poor posture

and low back pain.

WAYS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR HAMSTRINGS AND GLUTES

The Single-Leg RDL is a simple and e□ective exercise for strengthening your hamstrings and glutes, as well as a way to improve flexibility and balance. The Single-Leg RDL can easily be integrated into your daily exercise routine. The move takes less than five minutes to complete.

THE MOVE

SINGLE-LEG RDL

• Stand with your legs shoulder width apart.
• Tighten the abdominal muscles to stabilize the spine.
• Bend at the hip, moving your body forward and down.
• Raise your left leg behind you while you lower your upper body towards the ground until your torso is parallel to the floor.
• Keep you head straight with your arms perpendicular to the floor.
• Maintain a flat back as you lift your left leg. Avoid rotating your back as you lift your leg.
• Hold the position for 20-30 seconds. Relax and repeat with the other leg. Do 3 times for each leg.

[/et_pb_accordion_item][et_pb_accordion_item title=”Strengthening Your Racket Swing – November 2011″]

With paddle season in full swing, it is important to ensure that you strengthen your infraspinatus muscle. Being a part of the rotator cuff, the infraspinatus sits at the back of the scapula and attaches into the head of the humerus. As you serve or hit a forehand shot in racket sports, it is the job of the infraspinatus to slow down the arm after contact with the ball. This muscle has to absorb tremendous loads to decelerate the arm, which can lead to overuse and adhesion

formation in the muscle. Oftentimes, this overuse and adhesion formation in the back of the shoulder can restrict and slow down certain motions at the shoulder joint, which can lead to poor tracking of the humerus in socket. What's more, these adhesions and poor biomechanics can cause pain and inflammation in the top and front of the shoulder joint.

Typically, the best way to address this issue is first with manual therapy such as Active Release Techniques to address the muscles. If there is no inflammation in the tissues, simple rehabilitation exercises can be done to strengthen and stretch the muscle. Below are some exercises to help keep your shoulder healthy.

THE MOVE

Posterior Shoulder Self-Myofascial

The move is designed to target and reduce adhesions to the infraspinatus and posterior deltoid muscles.

- Start by standing with your feet shoulder width apart and your body angled at 45 degrees toward the wall so the back of the shoulder is touching. Using a lacrosse ball (tennis ball works but not as well), place it between your shoulder and the wall.
- While maintaining pressure with a slight lean, slowly rotate your torso so the ball rolls along your muscles. You may have to play around with the ball placement to find the tight and restricted spots. Use the diagram to help visualize the muscles.
- Spend 1-2 minutes rolling out the back of each shoulder each day.
- As you get comfortable with this move, try pulling the

treatment side arm across your body to stretch the muscles as you roll them.

Additional Moves

To strengthen your infraspinatus muscle, also perform the exercises listed below. The exercises can be found on the Chicago Chiropractic & Sports Medicine website at www.chicagochirosports.com/exercises.html.

- Shoulder External Rotation
- Foam Roller T-Spine
- Scapular Stability

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