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Hip Strengthening Exercises

The following hip strengthening exercises are designed to improve strength of the muscles of the hip. You should discuss the suitability of these exercises with your physiotherapist prior to beginning them. Generally, they should only be performed provided they do not cause or increase pain.

Begin with the basic hip strengthening exercises. Once these are too easy, they can be replaced with the intermediate hip exercises. As your strength improves, the advanced hip exercises can be added to the intermediate program.

Hip Strengthening – Basic Exercises

To begin with, the following basic hip strengthening exercises should be performed approximately 10 times, 3 times daily. As your hip strength improves, the exercises can be progressed by gradually increasing the repetitions and strength of contraction provided they do not cause or increase pain.

Bridging

Begin this exercise lying on your back in the position demonstrated (figure 1). Slowly lift your bottom pushing through your feet, until your knee, hip and shoulder are in a straight line. Tighten your bottom muscles (gluteals) as you do this. Hold for 2 seconds and repeat 10 times.



Figure 1 – Bridging

Hip Extension in Lying

Begin this exercise lying on your stomach in the position demonstrated (figure 2). Keeping your knee straight, slowly lift your leg tightening your bottom muscles (gluteals). Hold for 2 seconds and repeat 10 times.

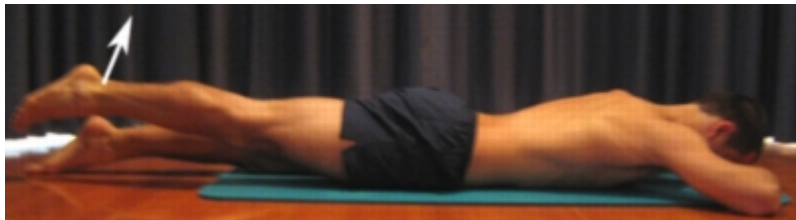


Figure 2 – Hip Extension in Lying (right leg)

Adductor Squeeze

Begin this exercise lying in the position demonstrated with a rolled towel or ball between your knees (figure 3). Slowly squeeze the ball between your knees tightening your inner thigh muscles (adductors). Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 10 times as hard as possible pain free.



Figure 3 – Adductor Squeeze

Hip Abduction Sidelying

Begin this exercise lying on your side in the position demonstrated (figure 4). Keeping your back and knee straight and foot facing forwards, slowly take your leg to the side tightening the muscles at the side of your thigh / hip (abductors). Hold for 2 seconds and repeat 10 times as far as possible pain free.



Figure 4 – Hip Abduction Sidelying (right leg)

Hip Abduction Standing

Begin this exercise standing at a bench or table for balance (figure 5). Keeping your back and knee straight and foot facing forwards, slowly take your leg to the side tightening the muscles at the side of your thigh / hip (abductors). Hold for 2 seconds and repeat 10 times as far as possible pain free.



Figure 5 – Hip Abduction Standing (right leg)

Straight Leg Raise

Begin this exercise lying on your back with one leg straight and one leg bent (figure 6). Slowly lift your straight leg to approximately 45 degrees keeping your knee and toes facing the ceiling. Hold for 2 seconds and repeat 10 times provided it is pain free.



Figure 6 – Straight Leg Raise (left leg)

Hip Flexion

Begin this exercise standing at a bench or table for balance (figure 7). Slowly lift your knee up as high as you can while keeping your back straight and tightening the muscles at the front of your hip (hip flexors). Hold for 2 seconds and repeat 10 times as far as possible pain free.



Figure 7 – Hip Flexion (right leg)

Hip Strengthening – Intermediate Exercises

The following intermediate hip strengthening exercises should generally be performed 1 - 3 times per week provided they do not cause or increase pain. Ideally they should not be performed on consecutive days, to allow muscle recovery. As your hip strength improves, the exercises can be progressed by gradually increasing the repetitions, number of sets or resistance of the exercises provided they do not cause or increase pain.

Resistance Band Hip Extension

Begin this exercise standing at a bench or chair for balance and a resistance band around your ankle as demonstrated (figure 8). Keeping your back and knee straight, slowly take your leg backwards tightening your bottom muscles (gluteals). Perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions as far as possible provided it is pain free.



Figure 8 – Resistance Band Hip Extension (left leg)