

CORE WORKOUT FOR SCIATICA

You will need a yoga mat, and about 20 minutes. This is a great workout if you are feeling fairly well or if you have some general aches and pains in your back or hips. It's about moving your body and quality of movement. Try this workout 2-3/wk for about 3 weeks to experience a stronger and more resilient core.



Remember your core is much more than your abs. It's essentially every muscle in the front, back, and sides of your body from below your neck to above your pelvis. A well designed program will target the hips, lower back, and core.

It's essential to warm up the back and nerves. Mild back discomfort and stiffness can be normal. If you don't control your breathing you may have a slight shock of nerve pain.

Remember one of the aggravating factors for nerve pain is increasing intra abdominal pressure. If you do that during core strengthening you may feel it.

DOWNWARD DOG WITH FOOT PEDAL

This will move the nerve and tug it. Pedal your feet and try to drive your heel to the ground. Do only one foot at a time and while you are pedaling keep your butt high in the air. If you feel a pull into your calf or back of leg, you are doing it right.

Dosage: 20 reps on each leg

Tips: It's okay if you can't stay up for very long. Take a few breaks and focus on good form. It's normal to feel this into your lower back as well.



PRONE PRESS UP

Lie on your stomach and place your hands just outside your shoulder but near the same level. Gently press up and feel the pressure into your lower back.

Dosage: 8 Repetitions for a 5 second hold

Tips: If you can't do this on your hands, then just try on your elbows. It's still working. You can also experiment with the position of your hands so that you feel greater pressure into your lower back when you press up. If you feel a zinger or pain into the leg, then stop. Try pressing up with a lower range of motion.



BRIDGE

While on your back, start with your feet flat. Then drive through your heels and lift your butt off the ground. As you lift, think about contracting your glutes. You should feel this in your hamstrings, glutes, and/or lower back.

Dosage: 2 sets 15 repetition

Tips: You want to feel this in the back of your body. If your hamstrings cramp just straighten your leg and rest. You can experiment with the distance your feet are from your butt. Some people prefer closer as they feel it more in their glutes.



PLANK

You want to start with your elbows under your shoulders and then go up on your toes while lifting your trunk off the floor. You want to focus on keeping your core contracted and your neck in good alignment. You want to do a slight chin tuck to protect your neck. Imagine pushing the earth away from your hands and hold that position.



Dosage: 5 repetitions for 20 second holds

Tips: These are better to do on a hard surface and if you can't lift your body off the ground try the modified plank which you do on your knees. Breath and focus on keeping your core contracted

PLANK WITH HIP EXTENSION

You can do this on your elbows or hands. Similar to the plank but this time you will stabilize your core and then lift a leg off the ground. Only try to lift about 1-2 inches. How high you lift your leg doesn't matter. If you feel back pain or leg pain when you lift then rest and don't lift your leg.

Dosage: 20 repetitions total for 1 second holds

Tip: You can modify by starting with a knee tap instead of the leg lift. Try just taping one knee rather than another. As you get stronger try lifting the leg.

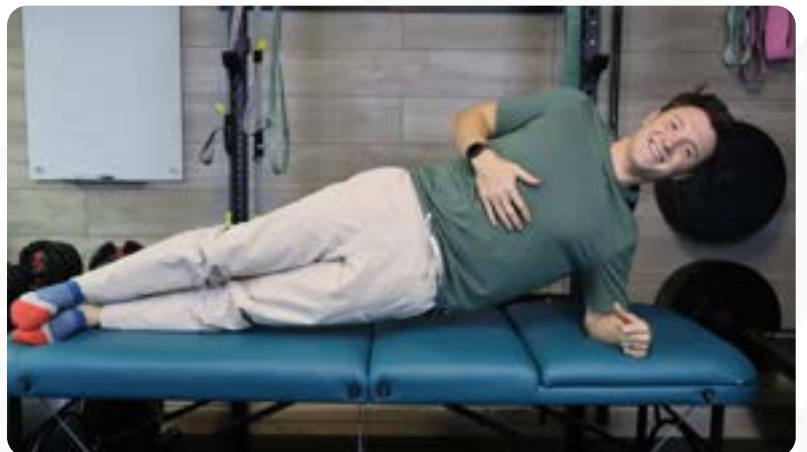


SIDE PLANK ON KNEES

Lie on your side and bend your knees. Stack your knees and feet on each other. From there place your elbow under your shoulder and then lift your hips. Think about contracting your abdominals and lifting your hips off the floor. You will feel the pressure of your knees touching as well.

Dosage: 3 repetitions of 20 sec on each side

Tip: When you lift your body off the ground, think about crunching the side of the abs closest to the ground and bringing your hips forward. Don't let your neck bend or sag.





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