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How it Works

As a physical therapist, I commonly treat muscle injuries, disc injuries, and over use injuries that cause aching and radiating sharp pain. What I've found is that whether the problem is in the patient's neck, shoulder, lower back, knee or foot, the pain and dysfunction that arises can be quickly and safely resolved with clinical identification and treatment of the restricted areas and appropriate stretches and/ or joint mobilizations. The catch is, you need someone else (me, the therapist) to identify and treat the problem areas for you. So, I developed The BackStrap™ to empower you to improve your own flexibility using sustained pressure from one of the therapy balls provided with The BackStrap™ kit following the guidelines as identified by body part under the Exercises portion of the web site or in The BackStrap™ Users Manual. The BackStrap™ Kits comes with a variety of balls to choose from. The ball you choose to use depends on the muscle group you. the level of intensity that you desire and/ or the position you use it in (suggestions are provided). While the air-filled balls are intended to be used at various inflation pressures the solid balls are for more aggressive sessions.

Getting Started Directions for use

The BackStrap™ is a therapy tool to assist you to independently release your muscles .



For extra strength, the nylon strap is triple reinforced under the Small Pockets.

- The **Large Orange Therapy ball and Dark Blue Thermal balls** insert into the large pockets towards the center of the strap. (See picture above) Use this therapy ball to release large muscle groups - gluteals, hamstrings, and quadriceps. See
- The **Small Powder Blue Therapy balls, Red Precision ball (not shown here), and White Thermal balls** insert in the small pockets right next to The BackStrap™ logo. If you look closely the nylon strap in this area is tripled over to provide extra reinforcement and strength. Choose either of these Therapy balls to release muscles along the sides of the spine, upper trapezius- neck and shoulder, rhomboids, arm muscles, calf muscles, base of head.
- The **Green Precision Ball** Inserts into the small pockets located in between the two large pockets. This pocket was specifically placed in the center of the strap



for easy handling and foot placement. Use this ball under plantar fascia (bottom of foot), palm of the hand and wrist (carpal tunnel).

TIP: Any therapy ball can be used anywhere on the body. The choice is yours. Try feeling the different balls on one area before deciding which ball to use. For example, interchange the Orange Therapy ball, Powder blue therapy ball, and Precision Therapy ball over the same area on your back. Then you'll know for sure which one feels the best for that area. This may change over time. Don't be surprised if you first like the Orange Therapy ball and a month later you like the Precision Therapy Ball better. As your tissue releases you will tolerate more localized pressure.

1. **Place one or two Therapy balls into The BackStrap™ by tucking them under the Spandex.** Use one ball for more specific placement and two balls to cover a larger surface area on your body.
2. Place The BackStrap™ and Therapy ball(s) over the muscle you want to release and let your body sink into the ball for 1-5 minutes. TIP: Over the first week of use only apply pressure for 10-30 seconds and then increase the time as tolerated.
3. Lie on your back, stomach or side, lean up against it, or pull it down. You choose the most comfortable position for your body. (See specific body area diagrams for suggestions and tips on placement.)
4. Next adjust The BackStrap to a new position and repeat. Only release 3 areas in one given session.
5. Expect to feel a little soreness in that area just after use. Then within one hour you should feel increased freedom of movement and less pain.
6. Make sure to read the **Contraindications** before proceeding to the exercises portion of the program.
7. When you finished releasing out these areas next complete the **Exercises** identified to stretch the joints in the area as well.



Indications for Use

Muscle Aches and Pains due to:

- Long periods of sitting- i.e. computer use, driving, studying, sitting in class, and attending conferences and seminars, long periods of time holding a book and reading.
- Changes in the weather- if you could tell me it's going to rain based on how you feel, The BackStrap™ is right for you.
- Long periods of standing- i.e. waiting in long lines in the grocery store or post office.

Stiffness in your muscles and joints can set in within minutes for some people.

Repetitive Activities- For example:

- Deciding to paint the whole inside of your house- over one weekend. This will probably cause neck and low back pain from extended periods of looking up and arching backwards and shoulder, neck, elbow and forearm pain from holding up the brush and the repetitive movement of brushing or rolling on paint.
- Hand writing. If you have to write dozens of thank you letters after a party or take lots of notes in class.
- Cooking. Twisting open jars, chopping.
- Wrapping presents, crafting. Cutting, folding, reaching across the table for something.
- Weekend warriors. Playing a pickup game of basketball to playing catch with the kids.
- Work related overuse.
 - At the office- typing, using a computer mouse, filing, phone use.
 - On the Job- climbing ladders, carrying heavy boards, and hammering nails.

Our lives are repetitive in nature, but if you mix up your activities by doing some simple positional holds using The BackStrap™ either during the activity or before and after, you can dramatically decrease the amount of stiffness that you would normally experience.



Conditions like:

Fibromyalgia

This is basically arthritis of the soft tissue where fibrous nodules develop within muscle and fascial tissue causing increased stiffness and extreme soreness when the affected areas are moved. When it comes to Fibromyalgia the affected areas are commonly throughout the entire body including the front and back of the neck mid back, elbows, buttock, hips, and insides of the knees. Based on my experience the neck and buttock areas seem to be the most debilitating and the other areas worsen during flares (periods when more areas are affected). Needless to say, this is a tough condition to treat. It requires a delicate balance between managing fatigue and proper exercise including cardiovascular training, maintaining and improving flexibility and weight training. The BackStrap™ can help improve your flexibility by stretching out the fibrous nodules, one nodule at a time. Patients have reported that with consistent use of The BackStrap™ they can better manage their pain because they can use it whenever they need it. By applying sustained pressure the density of the nodules with soften, reducing pain.

Osteoarthritis, Degenerative Joint disease, Degenerative Disk Disease, Herniated (Bulging) Discs, Spinal stenosis. These conditions usually lead to poor flexibility of the spine causing overuse of the surrounding joints – Hips and Shoulders.

Pregnancy (Pre and Post Partum)

The BackStrap™ is very effective for relieving muscles aches and pains associated with a growing baby during pregnancy. It is very safe to use sustained pressure over the tight muscles to relieve your low back pain. It is very comforting to know you have a device to use anytime you need to relief your pain without having to ask someone for a massage. Then after the baby is born use The BackStrap™ to release out tight neck muscles due to nursing following the neck exercises routines and balance out your low back and sacroiliac joints and hips as your body returns to normal following the low back exercise routines.



Contraindications for Use, Considerations, and Precautions.

Please use common sense when using The BackStrap™ and Therapy balls.

If it hurts- STOP. **IT DOES NOT HAVE TO HURT IN ORDER TO HELP YOU.** If it hurts then you are most likely applying too much pressure or the position you are in is too stressful. Try a less strenuous position (sitting instead of lying on the floor), use less pressure and apply the balls for less time (seconds instead of minutes). Using too hard of pressure may cause bruising and soreness.

Perform exercises slow in a controlled manner.

Remember to breathe. Stop and rest if you feel dizzy or short of breath.

Not all exercise is suitable for everyone. To reduce the risk of injury, consult your doctor before beginning this or any exercise program or exercise equipment. The instruction presented herein is in no way intended as a substitute for medical counseling.

Use product only as instructed in the literature provided.

Consult your physician before beginning use if you have:

- Infections (hot, redness, swelling, drainage, increased body temperature)
- Vascular disease (heart disease, high blood pressure)
- Advanced osteoarthritis
- Acute inflammation
- Joint hyper-mobility
- Malignancy
- Unhealed fractures
- Joint swelling
- Osteoporosis, Osteopenia
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- High-risk pregnancy (do not use around abdominal region if you are pregnant.)

Inspect the Thermal balls before each use for increased pliability and integrity of the seal. If it appears tethered, do not heat and only use for cold and ambient temperature applications.

Keep out of reach of children, dogs and pets. The thermal balls are not puncture resistant and may be harmful for your health if ingested. Immediately notify your physician or go to the emergency room if contents are swallowed.

This product is sold without any warranties or guarantees of any kind and manufacturer or distributor disclaim any liability, loss or damage caused by its use.

WARNING: Do not adjust The BackStrap™ while driving a vehicle. It is safe to adjust as a passenger.



Thermal Ball Uses, Directions and Precautions.

Uses: Use the Thermal balls (white or navy blue heavy balls with a snowflake logo) to relax and warm up chronically stiff muscles and joints by directly heating them. This is an excellent way to prepare your body for a deeper release before using The BackStrap™ Therapy balls. This is also a wonderful massage tool similar to using “hot rocks”, but softer. Try it and see for yourself.

As with anything, use common sense when heating the balls using warm water to transfer the heat to the balls. Heating up the Thermal ball can potentially increase its temperature to 104 – 112 degrees F (similar to a hot tub). This can create a soothing and comforting relaxation effect by increasing circulation and blood flow to an area.

Warming Directions- Bring 3 to 8 cups of water to boiling. Place the Thermal ball in the water and let stand for 2 minutes. Remove and feel for desired temperature. Put back in water for 30-second increments until desired temperature is reached.

Make sure to remove the Thermal ball from the water using tongs or spoon to prevent burning. The Thermal ball will eventually equalize to the same as the temperature of the water. You should be able to comfortably hold the ball in your hand.



***** Warning:**

Do Not Place the Thermal Ball *directly* in the Microwave.

This can cause damage to the casing and/or the valve seal causing plastic fatigue and leakage.

***** Please Read, for your safety.**

Repetitive heating or freezing of the Thermal ball will cause plastic fatigue of the casing compromising the valve seal over months of use. **Careful inspection of the casing and valve seal is required before every use.**

Do not sit or lie directly on the Thermal ball. Your weight may exceed the resistance of the ball causing leakage. When in use, be sure to periodically check your skin and remove the ball if excessive redness or pain is present.

Extreme care must be taken for hot applications with an aging Thermal ball to prevent burning. Reorder the Thermal balls whenever the encasement seems too pliant or elastic. If in doubt, retire the Thermal ball from hot uses and only use for cold therapy.



Freezing and Contrast Use Instructions

Cold Uses and directions

Freezing the ball will hold its temperature between 55 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit. This will constrict blood vessels, decrease inflammation and swelling and most importantly reduce pain. Store the ball in the freezer to keep cold. Place the Thermal ball in a bowl of ice water or put it in the freezer until the desired temperature is reached based on your comfort level.



Contrast Uses (alternating between hot and cold Thermal balls)

Avoid using the same ball. With two different Thermal balls heat one and freeze one as directed. Start and end by applying the cold Thermal Ball for approximately 3-5 minutes to an area reducing the blood flow. Then quickly switch to the heated Thermal ball to open up the blood vessels and refresh the area with nutrients. This technique is commonly used in athletic training rooms, which help speed recovery from athletic injuries like sprains and strains and bruising.



Improve your flexibility driving around town...

Below are just a few ideas for how you can easily use The BackStrap™ while commuting in the car, by plane, or train to release tight muscles and relieve pain.

Under the buttock
and hamstring



Choose a Therapy ball based on the amount pressure you want. Place the Therapy ball in The BackStrap™
And

**Lean up against it,
Fasten it around you,
or
Sit on it**

To relieve your tight muscles while you drive.



Over the
shoulder



At The Office...

Below are just a few ideas for how you can use The BackStrap™ at work to release tight muscles and relieve pain.



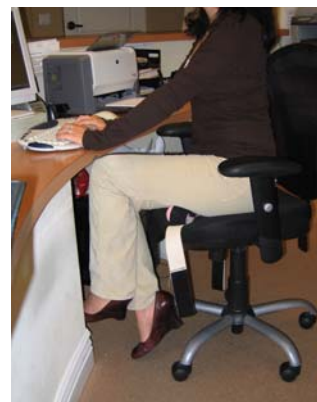
Use The BackStrap for Lumbar support in your office chair.



Choose a Therapy ball based on the amount pressure you want. Place the Therapy ball in The BackStrap™
And

**Pull on it,
Lean up against, Sit on it,
Fasten it around You or your chair.**

To relieve your tight muscles while you keep working.





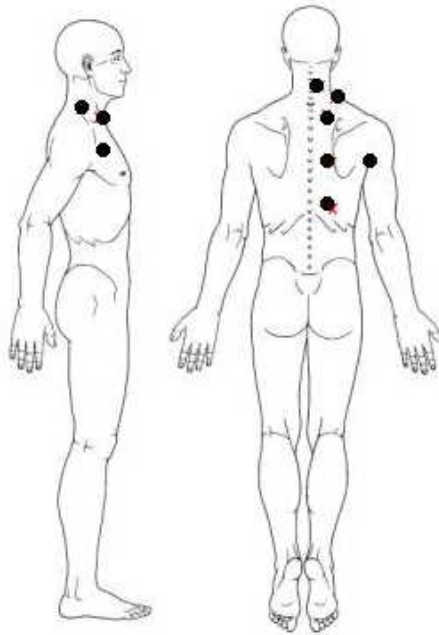
Neck and Upper Back

Place the Red or Powder Blue Therapy Ball over the areas marked with a Dot to decrease pain and stiffness in the neck and upper back. Simply Lie down on it, Lean up against it, or Sit on it. Hold each position for 1-5 minutes or until you feel the area softens and become less tender.

When you've finished releasing out these areas (3 dots only and one session of release) then complete the following exercises

1. Upper back/ Rib routine
2. Shoulder routine
3. Chest routine

These exercises will insure complete release of the soft tissue and mobilization of the rib cage.



The Back Strap

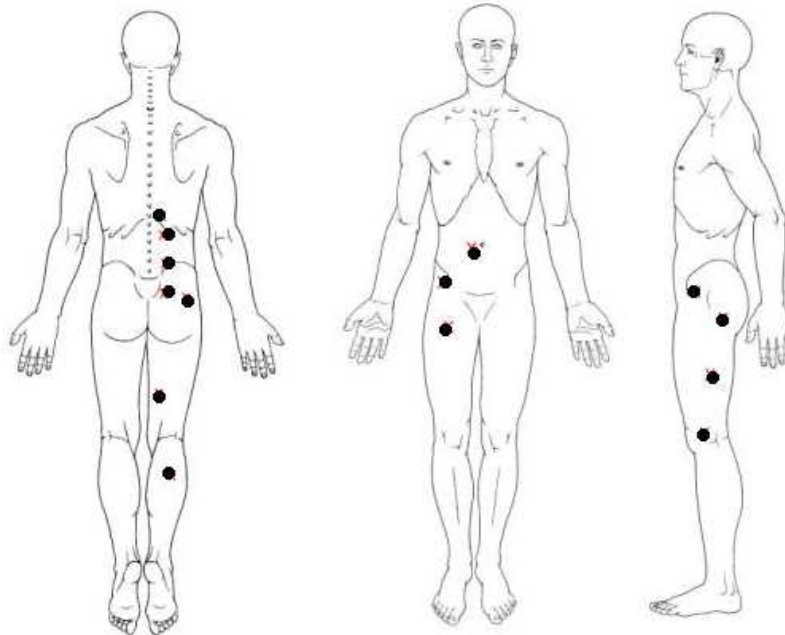
Low Back

Place the Red, Powder Blue or Orange Therapy Ball over the areas marked with a Dot to **decrease pain and stiffness in the lower back, buttock and legs**. Simply Lie down on it, Lean up against it, or Sit on it. Hold each position for 1-5 minutes or until you feel the area soften and become less tender.

When you've finished releasing out these areas (3 dots only and one session of release) then complete the following exercises

1. The Big Wheel and Big Wheel Diagonal
2. The Frog and ½ Frog
3. Hip Circles In and Out
4. Hip Rotation
5. Hip abduction (out) and Adduction (in)
6. The Dead Bug (core strengthening)

These exercises will insure complete release of the soft tissue and mobilization of the lower back and sacroiliac joints.



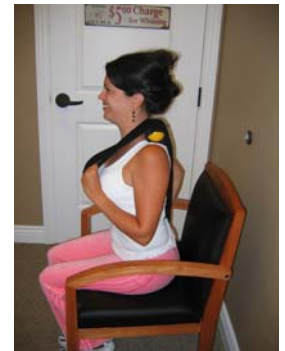
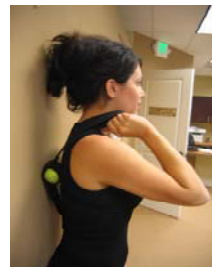
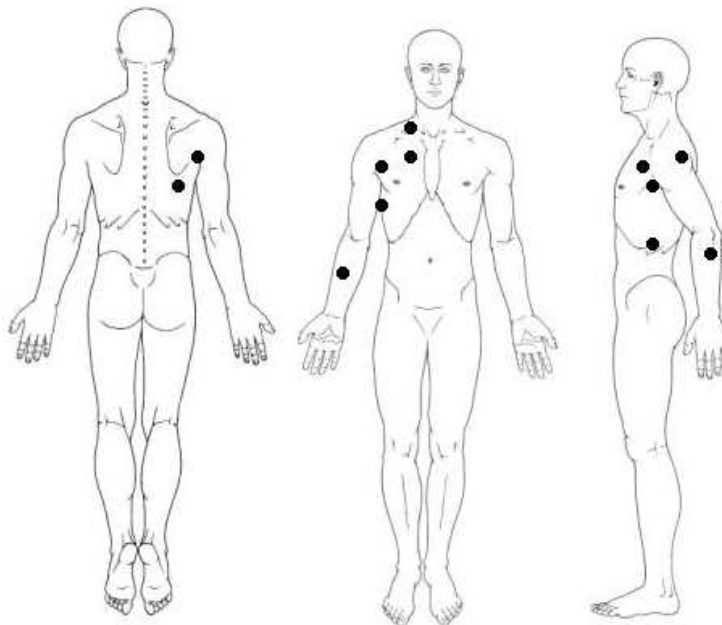


Shoulder, Arm and Wrist

Place the Red, Powder Blue or Orange Therapy Ball over the areas marked with a Dot to decrease pain and stiffness in the Shoulder, arm and wrist. Simply Lie down on it, Lean up against it, or Sit on it. Hold each position for 1-5 minutes or until you feel the area soften and become less tender. When you've finished releasing out these areas (3 dots only and one session of release) then complete the following exercises

1. Upper back/ Rib routine
2. Shoulder routine
3. Chest routine

These exercises will insure complete release of the soft tissue and mobilization of the rib cage.





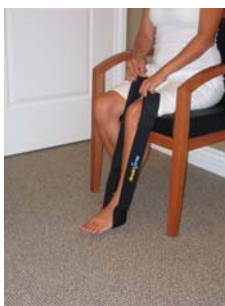
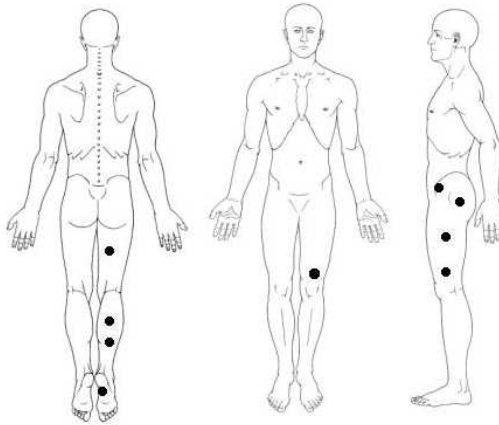
Lower Leg and Foot

Place the Red, or Orange Powder Blue Therapy Ball over the areas marked with a Dot to decrease pain and stiffness in the buttock, hip, thigh and lower leg. Use the Green Precision ball for the bottom of the foot. Simply Lie down on it, Lean up against it, or Sit on it. Hold each position for 1-5 minutes or until you feel the area soften and become less tender.

When you've finished releasing out these areas (3 dots only and one session of release) then complete the following exercises

1. All Low Back Exercises- Big wheel, Big Wheel Diagonal, Hip Rotation, Hip In and Out, Dead Bug
2. Foot Routine

These exercises will insure complete release of the soft tissue of the lower back, buttock, thighs and lower legs and mobilization of the lower back, sacroiliac joints and plantar fascia.



The BackStrap™ was specially designed so that the small pocket and ball would fit in the center of the strap. This design makes it easy to hold both ends of the strap and massage your foot with the Precision Ball while adjusting its position under the foot.





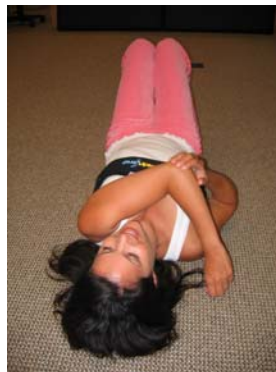
Neck/ Upper Back Routine

Purpose: helps relieve neck pain and tightness and improves rib mobility.

1. Lie on your back with two powder blue therapy balls in The BackStrap™
2. Place them so that the balls run parallel to your ribs and fit on either side of your spine.
3. Begin at the base of the neck. Complete one Snow Angel.
4. Next push your arms into the air and hold for a count of 10. This causes your body to push into the balls while the balls push back into you. If you have and rib dysfunctions where they get stuck backwards (it will feel very tender), this push should correct it, helping you regain lost mobility.
5. Next grab one elbow and pull it across your body- hold for a 10 count. The repeat with the other arm. (This intensifies the pressure on one side)
6. Next reverse the Snow angel and lower arms back to the floor.
7. Adjust The BackStrap down approximately one inch and repeat.
8. Repeat this routine until you get to the bottom of the rib cage and then move the balls back up the spine in one-inch segments until you return to the base of the neck.



*** Place a pillow under your head the first few times you do this exercise to prevent excessive neck extension.





Shoulder Release

Purpose: To stretch the trapezius muscle, and first rib.

Symptoms: Pain in the back of the neck and headaches.

1. Place the Red ball (best choice-for firm pressure) or Powder Blue ball (for soft pressure) in The BackStrap™ (closest pocket to the logo).
 2. Place the ball directly on top of the shoulder, just lateral to the base of the neck (logo towards you)
 3. Hold The BackStrap™ with one hand in the back and pull down with the other hand in the front.
- TIPS:** Try and keep your shoulders down and relaxed. Don't activate your trapezius.
4. Face front, Rotate away, Rotate to the same side, Side bend away, Side bend to the same side.
 5. Hold each position for a minimum of 10 seconds.
 6. Next take a deep breathe in focusing on the diaphragm. Hold the ball steady and let your body push up into the ball with the inhalation. Repeat 3 times.

Correct- Sit up tall, shoulders down



Incorrect- Slumping



Lastly, adjust the ball/s down your back like your drying off with a towel and then lean into a wall or sit back into a chair to release out those hard to reach areas.



The Pectoralis & Chest Release

Purpose: 1. To relieve pain and stiffness in the neck and shoulders associated with poor posture or overuse of the arms.

2. To help improve flexibility of the chest wall, shoulders and torso.

Overview: Poor posture can result in a forward head, elevated and rounded forward shoulders, an overly rounded upper back, and a loss or flattening in the normal curve in the small of your lower back.

Who should do this exercise: 1. People who work at a desk and sit most of the day. 2. Athletes- to improve rotation of the torso.

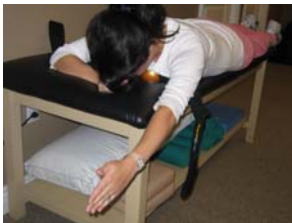
The Back Strap



Begin by placing the Orange ball and BackStrap over the first and second rib just below the clavicle (collar bone) on your left side (as shown). The placement of the ball is just off of the sternum to the left.



1. Lie down on your stomach with your right fist under your forehead and your left arm hanging down along the edge of a table (I use my dining room table at home or try your bed for a softer feel.). You will need a firm surface to push into. Push your left arm straight down towards the floor and hold for a count of 10. You will feel some discomfort under the ball if your rib and muscles are tight. After one or two self-treatments this exercise should not be uncomfortable any more because the tissue has released.



2. Next move your arm up and forward and hold a count of 10.



3. Next move your arm back towards your hip and hold for a count of 10.



4. Move the ball down 1-2 inches over the 3rd and 4th ribs and repeat steps 1-3.

5. Move the ball down one last time over the 5th and 6th ribs and repeat steps 1-3.

6. Lastly, move the ball out to the side, towards your shoulder and place the ball over the pectoralis muscle on your chest but in front of your axilla. Just let your arm hang down and let the ball press up into you releasing out the pectoralis for 2-5 minutes.

7. Repeat on the right side.



The Big Wheel

Purpose: To relieve low back pain by stretching out the top of the thigh and iliopsoas muscles (musculature across the top of the pelvis). The psoas muscle tends to get short and tight when low back dysfunction is present. Therefore, it is very important to stretch out this muscle group when you have low back pain and/ or stiffness.



Start by placing The BackStrap™ with the two Orange Balls under the buttock. Imagine placing the balls on *the top of the pockets of your jeans*. Next hug your knees to your chest. You should feel as if the balls are supporting you and your lower back should feel flat to the floor. If the balls fall out move them upwards until they are secure.



Begin by hugging your knees to your chest to give a nicely supported low backstretch.



Extend one leg to the ceiling while you continue to hug the opposite knee.



Stretch and imagine lengthening your leg towards the floor keeping your foot flexed (toes back).



Once your foot touches the ground relax into the position by letting go of your muscles. If you have an ilia rotation causing pain when you go up or down steps, for example, you may feel a clunk deep in your pelvis. Don't be alarmed this is completely normal. You should feel a stretch along the top of your thigh and directly over your hip. Don't be surprised if your gait feels freer after doing this stretch. In this position the lumbar spine is in a neutral spine position protecting it from undo strain.



Drag your heel back along the mat and then extend your leg once again to the ceiling and **repeat 3 times on each side.**



The Diagonal Big Wheel

Purpose: Hip capsule stretch. This will improve the swing through phase of gait.



This exercise is performed exactly as described under “The Big Wheel”, but this time you begin the wheel by abducting the leg approximately 25 degrees from center.

Then as you extend the leg toward the floor your foot will touch the ground adducted 25 degrees.

Don't be alarmed if you feel a deep clunk on the inside of your groin with this exercise. This just means that you're really tight. The clunk sound is a tendon snapping across the hip. As you gain flexibility this sensation will decrease.





Hip Rotation

Purpose: To gain coordination and body awareness. To be able to control muscles that move your thigh without rocking pelvis (hip dissociation).



Start by placing The BackStrap™ with the two Orange Balls under the buttock. Imagine placing the balls on *the top of the pockets of your jeans*. Next hug your knees to your chest. You should feel as if the balls are supporting you and your lower back should feel flat to the floor. If the balls fall out move them upwards until they are secure.



With one knee bent and the other leg straight, try and roll your foot and knee in and out while keeping your pelvis stationary and centered.

Move slowly with focused attention to the hip joint.

This is excellent to perform after surgery to the hip, pelvis or femur or if your leg has been in a cast.





Hip Abduction (Out) Hip Adduction (In) Exercise

Purpose: stretching the hip joint as well as massaging the piriformis muscle with the therapy ball.



Place the BackStrap™ with Orange therapy balls in place under your buttock.

Hug your Left knee to your chest (as shown).

Sweep your Right leg out to the side (abduction) while rolling your toe out (external rotation) at the same time.

Next sweep your Right leg across to the other side (adduction) while rolling your toe in (internal rotation).

Repeat 3 times for each leg.



The BackStrap™

The Frog

Purpose:

1. Helps to improve the flexibility of the hip joints, gait and fluidity of movement.
2. Strengthens the abdominal core.



Start by placing The BackStrap™ with the two Orange Balls under the buttock. Imagine placing the balls on *the top of the pockets of your jeans*. Next hug your knees to your chest. You should feel as if the balls are supporting you and your lower back should feel flat to the floor. If the balls fall out move them upwards until they are secure.



Bend your knees to approximately 60 degrees. Position your feet so that your heels are touching and your toes are apart, like the letter “V”.

Squeeze your heels together as you bend your knees feeling the contraction from your feet to the inner thighs to the pelvic floor to the abdominals.

Remember to suck in your belly button- this strengthens your “transverse abdominus”, the deepest layer of abdominals and the muscle group responsible for stabilizing your lower back.

Straighten your legs toward the ceiling, remembering to keep pressing your legs together.

***As you get stronger, lower your legs towards the floor, but remember to keep your stomach tight and not let your lower back arch away from the floor. Think of your legs moving on a strong, immovable pelvis by keeping your abdominals tight.



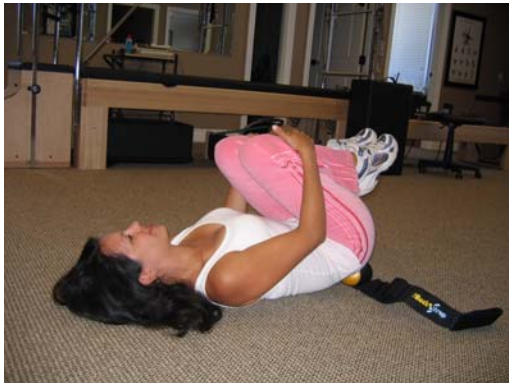
The BackStrap™ will support your lower back by holding your pelvis up. This allows you to safely move your legs without undue strain on your back.

Repeat 12 repetitions



1/2 Frog

Purpose: To increase the flexibility of the adductors (inner thigh muscles) and pelvic floor muscles, improve hip mobility and to strengthen the abdominal core muscles.



Start by placing The BackStrap™ with the two Orange Balls under the buttock. Imagine placing the balls on *the top of the pockets of your jeans*. Next hug your knees to your chest. You should feel as if the balls are supporting you and your lower back should feel flat to the floor. If the balls fall out move them upwards until they are secure.



Begin by bending your left knee and bringing it out to the side supporting it with your left hand. At the same time take the right leg and extend it towards the ceiling and then let it fall out to the side supporting the right leg and hip with your right hand.

Feel the inner thigh stretch.

Hold for a count of 10 then switch to the other leg and repeat 3 times.

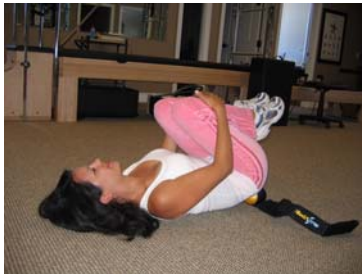
Remember to suck in your belly button to strengthen your Transverse abdominus- the muscle that supports your lower back.

Don't let your pelvis rock from side to side. Keep your tummy strong and flattened towards the floor.



Hip Circles

Purpose: To improve coordination of the legs, improve hip mobility, and strengthen your abdominal/ pelvic core.



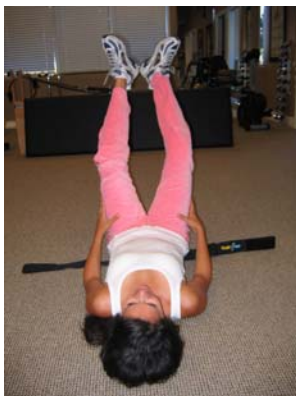
Start by placing The BackStrap™ with the two Orange Balls under the buttock. Imagine placing the balls on *the top of the pockets of your jeans*. Next hug your knees to your chest. You should feel as if the balls are supporting you and your lower back should feel flat to the floor. If the balls fall out move them upwards until they are secure.



Extend your legs into the air.

Open your legs as wide as comfortable for you.

Circle each leg in a clockwise then counter clockwise direction. Repeat 6 times in each direction.



Goal: To move your legs in a fluid coordinated motion without shaking. Try to keep your pelvis stable without rocking side to side or arch your lower back. Keep your belly button flattened toward the floor.



Core Strengthening

Purpose: To develop strength in the abdominal muscles to help protect the lumbar spine from injury. The primary goal is to strengthen the transverse abdominus, which is the deepest layer of the abdominals muscles. These muscles act like your internal abdominal brace for your lower back.



Start by placing The BackStrap with the two Orange Balls under the buttock. Imagine placing the balls on *the top of the pockets of your jeans*. Next hug your knees to your chest. You should feel as if the balls are supporting you and your lower back should feel flat to the floor. If the balls fall out move them upwards until they are secure.

Tighten your abdominals by bringing your navel towards the floor (suck in your belly button). This contracts the transverse abdominus muscle. Don't let your back rotate side-to-side or tip up and down- *hold very strong*.

Begin by alternating your legs on your stable core. Extend one leg forward then the other leg like your riding a bicycle.
20 repetitions.

Next add your arms- Left arm moves with the left leg, right arm moves with the right leg and continue to alternate.

Lastly add in tightening the pelvic floor as if your "holding it"- this contracts the pelvic floor muscles and then "go up an elevator" and this contraction brings in the lower abdominals.

Repeat 3 sets of 30 reps.

You may point your toes towards the ceiling when you first begin. Then as you get stronger (after about 1-2 weeks) start to lower your legs towards the floor.



The BackStrap™ acts as a bolster to support the lower back, hold you in a neutral spine and allow you to complete the exercise in proper form without the risk of injury to the lower back. This is so important when beginning an exercise program.



Self-Release Positions for the Abdominals and Diaphragm

Place the Therapy Ball over the areas as shown. Simply Lie down on it or Lean up against it. Hold each position for 2-5 minutes or until you feel the area soften and become less tender.

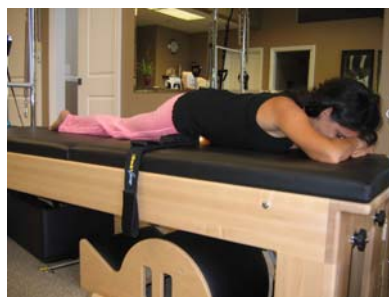
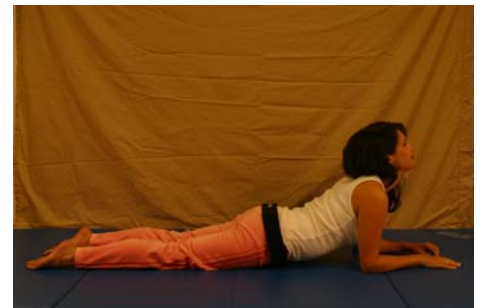
Place one or two Therapy Balls into The BackStrap™ and place them just below the edge of the ribs. This will localize placement for a diaphragm release. First lie flat with your arms along your sides and then come up onto your elbows to change the angle of the pressure. Continue to adjust the strap by moving it down (just above the navel, on top of the navel and below the navel) and repeat in both positions.



Releasing the diaphragm with help make breathing easier.



It is normal to feel sensations like “pings and pangs” as you release the abdominal area.





The Foot Routine

Purpose: To stretch the tissue on the bottom of the foot, Plantar fascia and arch.

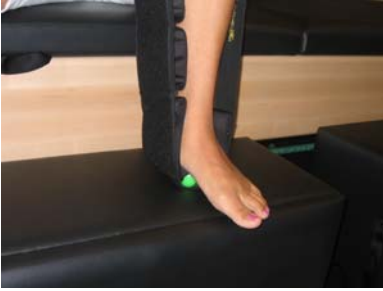
Plantar fasciitis is an over use, repetitive strain injury to the fascia on the bottom of the foot found typically in runners, walkers and hikers. It can occur in people who are not used to lots of walking and then take a “walking vacation in Europe” with poor unsupported shoes. The condition causes acute inflammation to the plantar fascia and can cause heel spurs at the attachment to the calcaneal bone. Proper treatment of the condition includes adding custom orthotics or a good pair of “off the shelf” arch supports, stretching out of the calf muscles (gastrocnemius soleus muscles and Achilles tendon), stretching out the plantar fascia it self and ice to decrease inflammation.

Here are some exercises I typically give to patients with plantar fasciitis, foot pain and/ or stiff feet.



1. Plantar Fascia stretch-

Place the small green precision ball in the small pocket located in the exact center of The BackStrap™



Localize placement of the green ball under the foot where the heel meets the arch.

Curl your toes down so that both the heel of your foot and your toes are touching the ground at the same time. Hold 2-5 minutes and try and relax into the ball.



This may be very uncomfortable or impossible when you first start trying this exercise, but do the best you can. It will get easier each time you do it.

Also, imagine that the sides of your feet are touching the ground. Although for most people this is not physically possible, this helps to stretch out the tissue directly on the ball.

Next move The BackStrap™ and green ball to the middle of your arch and repeat- Hold 2-5 minutes.



Next move The BackStrap to the base of the “ball of your foot” along the second toe. Hold 2-5 minutes.





2. Foot Massage



Using the green precision ball and BackStrap, hold your foot up in the air and pull strongly forcing the green ball up into your foot.

Next alternate pulling side to side to produce a massaging effect.



This feels great after a long day on your feet!



3. Calf stretch



Tuck the Orange or Powder blue Therapy ball or the Red Precision ball within the bend of the knee and kneel back into the ball so that your bottom is sitting on your heels. This placement should localize the ball into the center of the Gastrocnemius muscle of the calf when your sit back into the ball. Hold 2-5 minutes.

Typically, the Powder blue ball works best for most people, but the Red Precision ball will give a deeper more intense release.

Next adjust the ball approximately 3 inches lower with the calf to localize the soleus muscle.

Next adjust the ball directly over your Achilles tendon. Once again sit on your heels. Hold 2-5 minutes.

The BackStrap™ can securely hold the ball in place to prevent it from slipping side to side.



The Back Strap



Upper Trapezius-
Place a Therapy ball on the top of the shoulder and pull down.

Sitting/ Chair Exercises



Improve your flexibility
While relaxing in your favorite chair.



Upper Back-
Place the blue Therapy Balls on either side of the spine at the base of your neck, between the shoulder blades and lean back into the chair.



Deltoid-
Fasten The BackStrap™ around both shoulders and pull open your arms.



Mid Back-
Fasten The BackStrap™ around your waist and adjust the therapy balls to fit at the bottom of your shoulder blades.



Low Back-
Place The BackStrap™ in the small of your low back (waist line area) to release low back pain. Try using it as a Lumbar Support by attaching it to your chair.



Buttock & Hamstring-
Just sit on the Therapy ball.



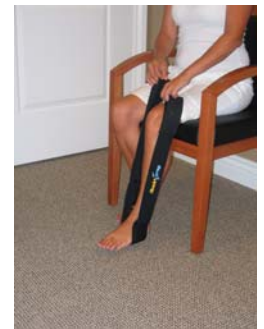
Quadriceps-
Place it over your thigh and hook the loose end to the heel of your foot and press down.



Shin-
Fasten The BackStrap™ around both legs and pull apart.



Calf-
Fasten The BackStrap™ around both legs and stagger your legs apart.



Foot-
Place the small green Precision ball under the heel of your foot and pull up with your arms or press down with your foot.



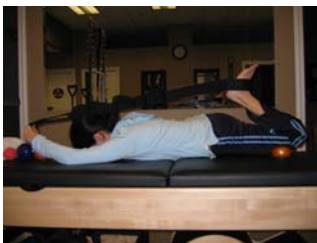
The Yoga Strap Function

Purpose: To make it easier to stretch a body part without straining your joints and hold the position for longer amount of time without fatiguing.



Loop The BackStrap™ around the foot and pull and hold to increase hamstring flexibility

Loop The BackStrap™ around both feet. Pull your heels down together to increase the flexibility of the adductor (inner thigh) muscles



Position your self on your stomach. Place a BackStrap ball under the quadriceps all along the central muscle belly. Loop The BackStrap around your foot and pull the heel towards the buttock. Tip: Perform this exercise on a table and drop the opposite leg (leg no being stretched) on the floor for better low back support to prevent excess low back extension.



Loop The BackStrap™ around the foot to stretch the thigh (quadriceps) in standing.



Pull your arm behind the back to increase internal rotation of the shoulder after surgery or Frozen Shoulder Syndrome.



Pull your arm down and behind the head to increase external rotation.



The BackStrap™ - Hand wash or place in a lingerie (mesh) bag and wash in a gentle cycle, line dry.

Thermal Balls-wipe the ball with a dampened towel with witch-hazel, alcohol or place them in the dishwasher on the top rack.

Therapy balls- Wipe with a damp soapy cloth.