

# Improve your Core and Pelvic Floor - Part 1

## Goals of this webinar:

- Provide a breadth of knowledge for professionals in a self-exploratory way.
  - You can feel safe and supported working through your own issues while learning how to help others at the same time!
- Continue analyzing what we can control and improve in the human body beyond the simple solution.
  - This is for those who've found that simple advice just doesn't work, which is common in professionals who often have many layers of compensation to investigate when figuring out what really needs to be addressed.

## Goals of the exercises in the webinar:

- Stronger lower abs
- Improved leaking
- Decreased posterior pelvic floor tightness

## Exercise #1: Finding Hamstrings: Proximal versus Distal Hamstring

- Our hamstrings attach behind the knee up to our ischial tuberosities.
- At the level of the knees, they function to bend them.
- At the pelvis, they are like anchors and help to posteriorly tilt the pelvis.
- We often tend to clench our glutes when we engage our hamstrings, which can create restricted movement in the back of our pelvis.
  - This can potentially contribute to back side pelvic floor tightness, weak lower abs, and leaking
- In this exercise, we are working on finding proximal hamstrings without glutes to help open up the back of the pelvis.



- Place your feet on a couch or a chair.
  - Note the direction of your feet when you place them on the chair.
    - Turned in will access more medial hamstring
    - Turned out will access more lateral hamstring
    - We want balance in the system→can explore foot positioning to help bring this balance
- Find your distal hamstrings:
  - Think, “pinch finger behind knee” by bending your knees more while you lift your hips off the ground
  - Remember this is not the goal of this exercise, as we’re working on pelvis control and position
- Find your proximal hamstrings:
  - Take your hands and find your ischial tuberosities
  - Pull them open with your hands, and then lift them up as much as you can
  - Do you feel the space around your tailbone opening? Try breathing into that area, feeling your pelvic floor (particularly the back) relax and open as you inhale
  - Next, think about lifting your ischial tuberosities more toward the ceiling by using your proximal hamstrings to pull your sit bones up rather than simply bending your knee more
  - Hold here for 30-60 seconds, and note where and what you are feeling
- Check in and make sure that your glutes/deep hip rotators (below and in between ischial tuberosities) are not firing and remain soft and squishy.
- Continue to hold, just using your proximal hamstrings, and breathe for a few rounds. If you are having trouble feeling those proximal hamstrings working, you can hold a bit longer and see if you are able to start feeling them (or at least feel less work being done behind your knee).

## Exercise #2: Pelvic Floor Contraction, Front versus Back

- How you contract the pelvic floor is important! Where you lead the contraction is going to change the kinetic chain that is involved.
- When you start the contraction from the back (posterior) you will get more glutes, hamstrings and deep hip rotators.
- This can contribute to leaking because we aren't contracting from the front.
- If instead we contract from the front, we can get more lower abdominals and a lot less engagement in the back.
- Run through both exercises below to feel the difference.



### Back Pelvic Floor Contraction

- Relax and lean back into a chair.
- Think about clenching your glutes and squeezing right around your anus to do a back pelvic floor contraction. What did you feel? Probably glutes!



## Front Pelvic Floor Contraction

- Now try bringing your knees in and feet out to open the back of the pelvic floor.
- Place your hand on your pubic bone and think about gathering and contracting the front of the pelvic floor by doing a nod with your clitoris.
- Continue to contract, gathering up, and feeling your lower abs contract up as you continue to lift your pelvic floor.
- You should be able to get just lower abs working with this, keeping your upper abs soft and squishy.
- Initiating the contraction from the front, you should feel less glutes, less obturator, and less tension in the back of your pelvic floor.
- The goal is a nice, balanced contraction but you may need to bias the front, particularly for the first 10% of the contraction, to help offset posterior pelvic floor tightness or a tendency to over-recruit glutes.
- Caution: While the majority of people have posterior pelvic floor tightness (this exercise is for them), some do have a tight front pelvic floor. In this case, avoid front pelvic floor contractions and try the exercise to find your hamstrings instead.
- Symptoms of a tight front pelvic floor: Feeling like you have a UTI, burning urination, and interstitial cystitis.
- Symptoms of a tight posterior pelvic floor: Poor lower ab contraction, poor front pelvic floor contraction, leaking, deep hip rotator pain, obturator internus pain, deep butt pain.
- How we initiate a contraction, the muscle intention, and the timing will change the whole dynamic of how the pelvic floor and abs contract. This will change the go-to muscles for our body and the balance in our system. This carries over to everyday life, and it's amazing how fast we can see changes in the body!