

Stage II – Lumbar stabilization Exercises

The next phase of lumbar stabilization exercises is focused on controlling the core muscles (transversus abdominus and multifidus) while moving your limbs. Three key exercises are emphasized; (1) leg drops, (2) leg slides and (3) arm raises.

All of the following exercises begin from the position of lying on your back with your feet flat on the ground (hips and knees bent). Always contract the transversus abdominus and multifidus muscles before initiating any of the following movements. If you are unable to maintain good core muscle contraction, take a rest, or continue the exercise later.

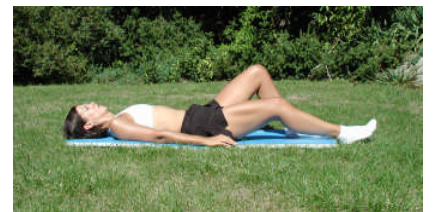
As a rule, the exercise is discontinued when (1) you are fatigued (shaking of the muscles is a good indicator of fatigue), or, (2) you are unable to maintain good form during the exercise. In general, 10 repetitions of each exercise should be performed.



Leg Drops – Slowly allow one knee to drop out to the side toward the floor, while the other knee remains upright. Repeat on the opposite side.



Leg Slides – Slowly slide one leg out into a partially extended position. After returning the leg to the bent, neutral position, repeat on the opposite side. Doing this exercise on a smooth floor, while wearing a sock helps, because your foot can slide easily.



Arm Raises – Slowly simultaneously raise both arms overhead at shoulder width apart. Slowly return to neutral.

TIP: During all of these exercises, you should concentrate on maintaining a neutral spine (slightly curved), with the core muscles contracted.