

FOAM ROLLER EXERCISES

Middle Back Release

Starting Position

Place a foam roller under your shoulder blades and lie on your back with your elbows bent, hands under the head and neck for support, knees bent, feet hip-width apart, hips on the mat (not pictured) and shoulders relaxed. Carefully bridge your hips off the floor to balance your weight between your feet on the floor and your back on the roller. Allow the weight of your body to relax onto the roller.

Action

Breathe steadily as you shift your weight forward and back, allowing the foam roller to move up and down your upper back. Repeat several times and notice as tension leaves your back.

Special Instructions

As you move the roller up and down by shifting your weight forward and back, find tight and sore areas of your back and hold those positions to help decrease tension. Keep your head supported in your hands at all times. Keep your belly pulled in tight and your glutes squeezed to help maintain the bridge position.



Lower Back Release

Starting Position

Sit on the floor with your knees bent, feet flat, legs hip-width apart and a foam roller on the floor behind your back (not pictured). Lean into the roller with your lower back as you place your elbows (bent at 90 degrees) directly underneath your shoulders. Keep the shoulders relaxed away from the ears. Allow the weight of your body to relax onto the roller.

Action

Breathe steadily as you shift your weight forward and back, allowing the foam roller to move up and down on your lower back. Repeat several times and notice as tension leaves your back.



1362 Lambton Mall Road, Unit #3
Sarnia, ON, N7S 5A1

Phone: 519.542.6060 Fax: 519.542.6061

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Gluteal Release

Starting Position

Sit on a foam roller with your back straight, knees bent, feet on the floor, palms flat, arms beneath the shoulders, fingers pointed forward (not pictured). Engage your abs, squeeze your thighs together and carefully lift your feet off the floor, keeping your knees bent and finding your balance on the roller, using your arms for support. Allow the weight of your body to relax onto the roller.

Action

Keep your abs engaged and breathe steadily as you shift your weight forward and back, allowing the foam roller to move up and down your buttocks. Repeat several times and notice as tension leaves your glutes.



ITB Release

Starting Position

Stack your legs to lie on your right side and place a foam roller beneath the outer thigh of your right leg, near your hip (not pictured). With both hands on the floor, cross your top (left) leg in front of the bottom leg, foot flat on the floor. Keep your shoulders relaxed, your spine long and your arms straight. Allow the weight of your body to relax onto the roller, using your arms for balance and support.

Action

Breathe steadily as you shift your weight, allowing the foam roller to move up and down on your outer thigh (from your hip to your knee). Repeat several times and notice as tension leaves your outer thighs and IT band area. Switch sides.



Special Instructions

Tightness in the IT band can cause knee, hip and back pain, and the more painful this release feels, the more your IT band needs to be worked on (released). As you move the roller up and down by shifting your weight, find tight and sore areas of your IT band and try to hold those positions to help decrease tension. The area near the knee tends to be the tightest (and most painful) region of the IT band. Don't roll past your knee. To decrease the pain of this move, put more weight into your arms; over time, use the arms less and put more weight onto the roller as you can handle it.



Roller Plank – Core Activation Exercise

Begin by kneeling on a mat with foam roller behind you. Place roller under your shins. Face front and lower your shins on top of the foam roller, legs together, as you place your elbows directly under your shoulders, clasping the hands together. Lift your hips off the floor until you are in a plank position with your shoulders, hips, knees and ankles in one long straight line with the abs engaged and the legs together. Hold as long as you maintain abdominal hollow.

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