

PERFORMING THE TRANSVERSE ABDOMINAL EXERCISE

The transverse abdominal muscle is the deepest layer of abdominal muscles. It is an important muscle for pelvic girdle stability. The transverse abdominal muscle aids in supporting the abdominal contents and works with the pelvic floor muscles. Regular exercise of these muscles can build awareness, muscle strength and endurance.

BEGINNING THE EXERCISE

The transverse abdominal exercise is a low intensity holding contraction of the lateral abdominal wall. The contraction creates a feeling of deep tension and drawing in of the abdomen.

- Your spine (low back) should be in neutral position. Your therapist will help you find your neutral position.
- Always perform the exercise at 30-40% of maximum effort:
- Do not strain, bear down or bulge your abdomen as you do the exercise.
- If you feel the quality of your exercise decline, by starting to strain or bulge the abdominal muscles, stop your exercise session.

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

- Start lying down with your knees bent.
- Place your fingers on your lower abdomen just inside your pelvic bones.
- Inhale a diaphragmatic (belly) breath.
- Tighten the muscles as if you are trying to zip up a pair of pants that are too tight. This draws your navel toward your backbone without moving or tilting your pelvis. This flattens the lower and side muscles of your abdomen and you will feel the contraction under your fingertips.
- Sigh the air out gently as you maintain the contraction.
- Remember: do not bulge your belly or allow any pelvis or back movement.

EXERCISE PRESCRIPTION

- Hold the exercise for ____ seconds.
- Repeat this exercise ____ times ____ times per day.