

# Core and Balance Exercises

## What is our core:

Our core is made up of 29 muscles between our rib cage, pelvis, and glutes on the front and back of our bodies.

## How to engage core:

While sitting or standing, keep your back straight and your shoulders relaxed, without rounding or slumping. Gently pull your belly button in toward your spine and tighten the muscles between your ribs and pelvis. Maintain your normal breathing while doing this. It should feel like you're gently "cinching up" your core.

## Why our core is important:

A strong core is important because it helps support your spine and takes some of the pressure off your back and other parts of your body. This means less pain and better posture, making everyday tasks like carrying groceries or gardening more efficient and safer. Plus, having a strong core improves your balance, which helps prevent falls and keeps you steady. Adding core exercises to your routine can make a big difference in how comfortable and coordinated you feel.

## How to complete these exercises:

- Start with one set of 10 repetitions three times per week for a couple of weeks. Gradually increase to 20 repetitions and sets of two or three.
- For isometric/static exercises, hold the exercise for as long as possible. Repeat two to three times.

## Core Exercises

### Chair Sit Up

- Sit on edge of chair, with a tall spine, core engaged
  - Place your hands on your hips or across your chest
  - Lean back in chair until your torso is approximately at 45-degree angle, do not make contact with backrest
  - Return to starting position then repeat 10 times
- Or
- Lean back in chair (isometric/static) until your torso is approximately at 45-degree angle and hold without returning to start position for approximately 20-30 seconds

[Click here for Chair Situp video](#)

### **Chair Back Extension**

- Sit on edge of chair, with a tall spine, core engaged
  - Place your hands on your hips or across your chest
  - Lean forward in chair until your torso is approximately at 45-degree angle
  - Using lower back, return to starting position then repeat 10 times
- Or
- Lean forward in chair (isometric/static) until your torso is approximately at 45-degree angle. Hold without returning to start position for 20-30 seconds

[Click here for Chair Back Extension video](#) (*you can complete this exercise without equipment*)

### **Chair Core Twist**

- Sit on edge of chair with tall spine, core engaged
- Extend arms out at chest height
- Twist torso to the side, come back to center and repeat on other side
- Complete 10 repetitions on each side

[Click here for Chair Core Twist video](#)

### **Chair Knee Crunch**

- Sit on edge of chair, with tall spine, core engaged
- Lean back slightly while keeping straight spine
- Place fingertips on each side of head
- Lift left knee while crunching and touching right elbow to left knee
- Return to starting position and repeat 10 times on each side

[Click here for Chair Knee Crunch video](#)

### **Captain's Chair**

- Sit on edge of chair, with tall spine, core engaged
- Grip sides of chair for support
- Keeping knees bent, slowly raise knees and lift feet off floor, pause and lower to floor
- Repeat. Complete 10 repetitions

[Click here for Captains Chair video](#)

### **Chair Squat – 10 reps**

- Sit on edge of chair, tall spine, pull belly button toward spine
- Feet hip width apart, hands on hips/chest, shift chest over feet
- If you use hands to stand, overtime try to use hands less attempting to use your legs more
- Press through heels and stand up, keeping chest lifted throughout
- In controlled motion, return to seated position and repeat
- Maintain breath throughout exercise

[Click here for Chair Squat video](#)

### **Chair Pose**

- Stand with feet hip width apart, belly button to spine
- Maintain straight spine, bend knees, hinge at hips and sink hips back
- Gently tuck tail
- Raise both arms forward and up, in line with ears
- Hold for as long as comfortable. Repeat.

[Click here for Chair Pose video](#)

# Balance Exercises

## Chair Squat

- Sit on edge of chair, tall spine, pull belly button toward spine
- Feet hip width apart, hands on hips/chest, shift chest over feet
- If you use hands to stand, overtime try to use hands less attempting to use your legs more
- Press through heels and stand up, keeping chest lifted throughout movement
- In controlled motion, return to seated position and repeat
- Maintain breath throughout exercise

[Click here for Chair Squat video](#)

## Chair Pose

- Stand with feet hip width apart, belly button to spine
- Maintain straight spine, sink hips back
- Gently tuck tail
- To increase intensity, raise both arms forward and up, in line with ears
- Hold for as long as comfortable. Repeat

[Click here for Chair Pose video](#)

## Standing Hip Abduction

- Stand with feet hip width apart, tall spine, use chair for balance
- Shift weight to right foot/leg, keep slight bend in right knee
- Press left foot out to side, maintain tail spine, do not lean
- Complete 10 reps, then complete exercise with other leg

[Click here for Hip Abduction video](#)

## Standing Hip Extension

- Stand with feet hip width apart, tall spine, use chair for balance
- Shift weight to right foot/leg, keep slight bend in right knee
- Press left straight back, do not bend knee
- Maintain tail spine and do not lean to the right
- Complete 10 reps, then complete exercise with other leg

[Click here for Standing Hip Extension video](#)

## Single Leg Balance

- Stand tall, core engaged
- Shift weight to right leg, keeping slight bend in knee
- Raise knee as high as comfortable and hold
- Repeat with other leg

[Click here for Single Leg Balance video](#)

## Heel Raises

- Stand feet hip width apart, tall spine, core engaged, use chair for balance
- Lift toes as high as possible, then lower. Maintain control up and down, do not rock
- Complete 10 reps, rest and repeat

[Click here for Heel Raises video](#)

## Toe Raises

- Stand feet hip width apart, tall spine, core engaged, use chair for balance
- Lift heels as high as possible, then lower. Maintain control up and down, do not rock
- Complete 10 reps, rest and repeat if possible

[Click here for Toe Raises video](#)

## Heel Toe Walk/Tight Rope Walk

- Stand tall with one foot directly in front of the other foot, heel to toes
- Walk forward by placing heel in front of toes for 10 steps, turn around and repeat.  
*To progress exercise, complete the same exercise moving backwards*

[Click here for Tight Rope Walking video](#)

**Tiffany Johnson**

[tiffanyjohnson22@gmail.com](mailto:tiffanyjohnson22@gmail.com)

720-254-3475

[empowerheartfitness.com](http://empowerheartfitness.com)