

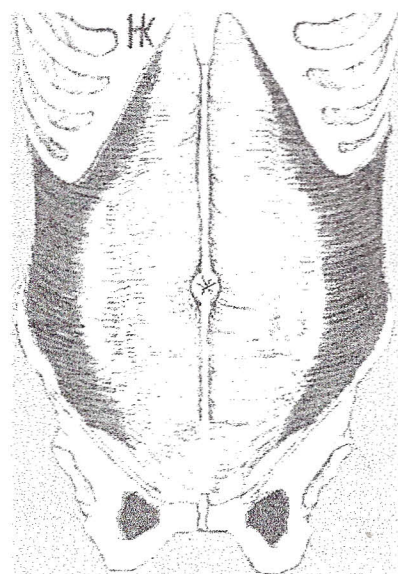


Transversus Abdominis Training

LOCATION: The transversus abdominis (TA) muscles attach from the diaphragm above, pelvic crest below and to the side, linea alba (abdominal connective tissue) in the center front, and around the back to the segments of the spine via the thoracolumbar fascia.

PURPOSE: To stabilize the lumbar spine and trunk, and flatten the abdominal wall.

TECHNIQUE: Gently contract your TA muscles by slowly and subtly drawing your internal abdominal contents inward. (See cues below for help). The contraction should start very slowly, and come from deep inside between your belly button and your pubic bone, and be subtle. (On a scale of 0-10, with 10 being strongest, your contraction should be about a 2). Your ribs or trunk should NOT move. Hold the contraction for at least 10 seconds or longer.



You should be able to contract this isometrically in any position (lying, standing, sitting, etc). But start with lying down so it's easier to feel the gentleness.

Helpful Cues:

- Gently contract as if you are trying to pull the front part of your pelvis bones toward the midline.
- Gently contract as if you are trying to pull your skin slowly away from your waistband of your pants.
- Imagine your belly button being 2 inches below the surface of your skin, and gently pull it back toward your spine.
- Tactile Cues:** put your fingers inside your pelvic bones in the front, gently pushing inward. Keep the outer layers of your belly soft while you gently contract as above. You should not feel your belly get taut or push out into your finger. You should feel a gentle softening under your fingers when you relax the contraction.
- Utilize your pelvic floor to help if you are having difficulty- (gently contracting as if you are stopping the flow of urine, or for men, gently lifting the scrotum)

Progression: Increase the hold time, contracting while brushing your teeth or while talking on the phone, while sitting at a stoplight, or when doing normal tasks (picking up a bag of trash, opening a heavy door, while working out.) If you are using abdominal exercises in the gym, you should make sure this muscle is turned on and engaged before every repetition of each exercise!