

FITNESS BALL: HOME CARE EXERCISES

STRETCHES: Elongates muscle fibers for proper use of muscle and joints. Help prevents injuries and maintains alignment.

Seated Side Lunges

1. Sit with the ball between your legs, which should be turned out. Bend your right knee so that you are in a side lunge. As you move your legs, tilt your torso to the right, bringing your right arm to your right knee. Raise your left arm along the left side of your torso, over your head, keeping it straight.
2. Take two counts to come down into this posture, hold the pose for two counts, and then go to the other side. Do this 8 times on each side.

Seated on Ball: Chest Stretch

1. With the ball on the floor, sit slightly below the top, feet on the floor.
2. Keeping your shoulders down, clasp your hands behind your back. Breathe deeply and raise your arms above your head as you bend forward from your waist. Keep your hips on the ball even though it will roll back a bit.

Seated on Ball: Side Stretch

1. With the ball on the floor, sit on the top, feet on the floor, arms by your sides, neck long, abs contracted.
2. On an inhale, raise your left arm straight above your head, being sure to keep your shoulders down. Then, on an exhale, lean slightly to the right, creating a curve in your right side. The ball will roll a little.
3. Come back to center and repeat to the other side. Do this 16 times (8 X on each side).

Lay Back Over Ball: Side Open Chest Stretch

1. With the ball on the floor, lie over the top with your chest and shoulders supported, head relaxed down the top slope of the ball. Bend your right leg and rest your weight on your right knee and shin, while extending your left leg long, foot on the floor.
2. On an exhale, roll toward your right, letting your arms extend down the side of the ball and felling your chest open and stretch against the top of the ball. Keep your shoulders down from your ears and your hips long in the front of your body.

Lay Back Over Ball: Open Chest Stretch

1. While seated on the ball, feet slightly apart and arms hanging by your side, slowly walk forward while rolling back on the ball. Support your lower back and neck.
2. Keep your hips up and knees bent at a 45 degree angle.
3. With head supported bring arms up and out, hanging over the ball.

**CORE WORK – Building and conditioning abdominal and back muscles to support structure.
Helps in maintaining proper body alignment.**

Kneeling Over Ball: Lean Away with Elbows

1. With the ball on the floor, put your hands on the top, feet on the floor, body at an angle from the crown of your head to your feet. Make sure your shoulders are away from your ears and your back is long and straight, elbow bent by your sides. Exhale all of your breath.
2. Then, on an inhale, lift your chest up to make a long, natural arch in your back. Don't scrunch your shoulders or compress your lower spine by going too high. Instead, feel your body nice and long in an elegant curve.
3. Hold this for 5 breath cycles (inhale and exhale is one cycle). Then come down. Repeat as many times as you like, focusing on the length of your spine each time.

Lay Chest Over Ball: Back Extension

1. With the ball on the floor, lie with your hips at the top, your upper body folding forward with your abs contracted. Put the back of your hands against your forehead, fingertips touching, and keep your neck long, shoulders relaxed.
2. Keeping your torso long, lift your upper body away from the ball and up, but don't come up past a straight-backed position. In other words, don't overarch your lower back. Come back to the start position.

Lay Chest Over Ball: Push-Ups

1. With the ball on the floor, put your upper body on the ball, legs out straight, and then roll forward on the ball, so that your thighs rest on the ball and your hands hold your upper body off the floor, body at an angle. Your body should be straight, abs contracted, neck straight, eyes on the floor. This is the start position.
2. Bend your elbows and lower your head, neck, chest, and shoulders toward the floor without letting your torso sag or your butt stay up in the air.

Return to the start position. Do this 8 times. Rest, then repeat.

On the Floor: Abdominal Curl with Leg Extension

1. Lie on the floor, back gently pressed to the floor, hands behind your head, elbows out. The ball should be between your feet and lower legs, knees bent, toes pointed, abs contracted, hips even on the floor.
2. On an exhale, bring your head, neck, and shoulders off the floor as you straighten your legs. Keep your back gently pressed to the floor. You should feel this in your abs.

On an inhale, come down slowly. Do this 8 times. Rest, then repeat.