

Protect Your Back with Core Strengthening Tips For Prone Floor Exercises
Please read before doing prone floor exercises

LOWER BACK CAUTION: Tips for practicing the following prone position exercises listed below

- ❖ In any prone position be sure you feel safe in that position (no sharp shooting pains)
 - ✓ *You can use a pillow under hips for more support during prone exercises and under front ankles to keep hips in a neutral position*

- ❖ **Stabilize Core (torso) on floor:**
 - ✓ forehead resting on floor or a pillow
 - ✓ broaden chest and relax top of shoulder muscles
 - ✓ Gently draw shoulder blades downward and together, sliding them toward hip pockets
 - ✓ Level hips and contract belly button to spine causing pubic bone to press into floor (resembles a reverse abdominal curl to anchor hips through lower abdominal muscle recruitment not buttock muscles). Engage midriff muscles too. **Remember it is a successive contracting of core muscles**
 - ✓ For exercise movements you can't perform, try visualizing yourself doing the exercise movement.

- ❖ **Listen to your body** and frequently use rest positions listed below as needed.
 1. Use modifications listed below if needed. Better to do the exercise safely and correctly.

Remember its quality not quantity of movement and repetitions

- ❖ **Exercises in prone position (on stomach)**
 1. **Prone ribcage/ chest lift**
 - a. Place forehead and palms on floor with elbows wing level and fingertips about ear level
 - b. Contract belly button in and up toward spine causing pubic bone to press into floor
 - c. Peel spine off the floor (as if lifting a string of pearls off the floor) while pushing up with forearms and ribcage off the floor to your comfort zone with no pain. Toes stay on floor. **Rest as needed.**

 2. **Butterfly** (upper back extension) prone position with arms by sides and palms up, forehead on mat with the chin slightly tucked to keep neck elongated and eyes looking at floor
 - a. Begin to peel you head, chest and shoulders off of the mat while pinching the shoulder blades together,
 - b. Arms are lifting at the same time to the height of the buttock as you are raising the head, chest and forehead from the floor only to a pain free level. **Rest as needed.**

****Caution:** *If you can't lift chest off of floor in the beginning. Begin by squeezing the shoulder blades and imagine/visualizing the lift until you begin to lift the head, shoulders and chest off the floor*

 3. **Prone leg extensions** forehead rests on back of hands ... engage core...pressing pubic bone into floor with abdominal muscles, then squeeze buttock muscles in order to lift legs off floor, keep hips on floor
 - a. Lift one leg and then the other while keeping hips on the floor
 - b. Or lift both legs just clearing the floor or a bit higher if you can. **Rest as needed.**

****Caution:** *If you can't perform the lift then visualize the movement and the engaging of muscles needed*

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4. **During heel beaters forehead rests on back of hands on floor...** engage the core pressing pubic bone into floor... legs are shoulder width apart or more, toes pointed out, then gently squeeze buttock
- a. Lift legs with toes pointing outward and click heels together return to shoulder width apart. Continue *beating your heels together by moving legs in and out.*

****Caution:** modify movement by one of the following:

- i. *Practice lifting only one leg at a time and then progress to both legs*
- ii. *Slide legs in and out until you can begin lifting both legs and moving them in and out to beat heels*

5. Rest positions are from hands and knee positions

- a. Low back stretch = pose of the child or Thoracic stretch in a *diagonal pose of the child arms extended toward one corner then repeat to the other corner*
- b. Cat and Camel for gentle spinal flexibility, on hands and knees or on back
- c. Gentle hip circles