

WHY ARE CORE MUSCLES IMPORTANT?

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The core is a corset of muscles surrounding the back and abdomen which support and control the spine and pelvis, thus providing a stable and mobile base upon which all the other muscles can initiate movement.

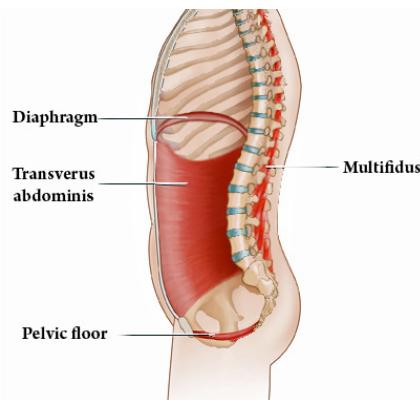
Core muscles include the deepest layer of the abdominal muscles, para-spinal muscles which attach directly to the vertebral bones, pelvic floor muscles and the diaphragm. They work together in a coordinated way to align the spine and control the position of the spine during everyday activities such as gardening and DIY.

An efficient core is important for all of us, not just athletes and sports people as core muscles keep the body stable and balanced allowing the performance of everyday tasks.

These deep muscles work continuously for long periods and must be properly coordinated to maintain spinal stability. They

also have an anticipatory function. Thus before a person moves, the core muscles fire up automatically before movement of the limbs occur. Even reaching for a glass of water involves the core muscles.

Over-activity in the core muscles is counterproductive as too much tension



interferes with normal movement patterns and the transfer of energy through the body. Indeed it has the potential to be a source of pain in itself.

The core is important for normal movement and enhanced performance:

- improved overall fitness
- reduced risk of injury
- good posture
- improved balance and reducing the risk of falling
- maintaining pelvic floor function which can help manage stress incontinence
- prevention or reduction of low back pain
- an increased sense of well being

PRRT run exercise classes based on Pilates principles and Tai Chi which improve core function.

To find out more about how you can improve your core function contact PRRT.

PRRT is based at Maryfield, Holywood and provides psychology, physiotherapy, personal development and training to the retired police population. PSNI employees can access our healthcare services via referrals from PSNI occupational health. Serving officers can access personal development and training directly. For further information or to make an appointment please call 028 9042 7788.



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