

Basic Exercises

FOAM ROLLER

The foam roller is a great tool to provide deep tissue massage.

A foam-rolling technique, called self-myofascial release (SMR), works similarly to massage therapy, only rather than a therapist applying manual pressure to your muscles, you apply your body weight to the foam roller. The idea is to seek out tender spots in your soft tissues, also known as knots or trigger points, and then roll your body over the foam roller to massage out the tight spots and relieve pain, pressure, and inflammation.



For additional questions,
please contact
Industrial Rehabilitation
Paul Rudis: 376-2109
Laura Carpino: 376-9040



QUADRICEP STRETCH: Releasing your quadriceps (quads) is one of the easiest foam roller exercises. Simply lay on top of the roller using your hands for balance and work the front of the thigh from the hip down to the knee. You can perform this exercise with one or both legs on the roller, depending upon how much pressure you can handle or desire. If you want less pressure, keep one leg off the roller and use the foot to support some of your body weight.



CALF STRETCH: Position the roller under the calves. Using your hands for support, slowly roll from the knee down to the ankle pausing on any tight or sore spots. Roll with your feet turned in and out. Keep toes flexed and pointed to work the entire muscle group

Increase or decrease pressure by using one or both legs at a time, or placing one leg on the other for even more pressure.



IT BAND STRETCH: Using the foam roller on the IT band can be painful, but many people find it's one of the most useful stretches you will do with the foam roller. Lie on the roller on your side, with the roller positioned just below the hip. Your top leg can be in line with the bottom leg if you want a lot of pressure. Or, bend it in front of you to unload some of your body weight and provide better balance. Use your hands for support and roll from the hip down to your knee, pausing on any tight or sore spots. Repeat on the other side.



HAMSTRING STRETCH: To work your glutes (butt) and hamstrings (back of the thighs) start by sitting on the roller with the soft, meaty part of your buttock directly on top of the roller. Begin slowly rolling back and forth and slightly side to side to release any tight spots in the muscle. Slowly roll down your leg toward your knee and work the hamstrings in the same way. Change your position from side to side to work the entire muscle. Slowly roll from the buttock down to the knee pausing on any tight or sore spots. Increase or decrease pressure by using one or both legs at a time. Roll with your feet turned in and out to cover the entire muscle group.



BACK STRETCH: Use a foam roller to massage and release the muscles of the upper back (the trapezius and rhomboids) by positioning the foam roller beneath your shoulder blades. Support your head with your hands and keep your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Use your feet to control your motion and pressure and start rolling toward your head, pausing at any sore spots. Roll back down to the mid-back and repeat.

Resource: E. Quinn Sports Medicine Guide

PRECAUTION: Not intended as a substitute for the advice of a physician or a personal health care provider. If you have medical conditions requiring attention or which may be aggravated by physical activity, consult your health care provider regarding the type of activity that is safe and appropriate for you.