

Active Health Solutions

Foam Roller – Lower Body



Why Use a Foam Roller?

You can use the foam roller to provide self-soft-tissue-mobilization (SSTM). Benefits of SSTM include: improving muscle flexibility and tightness, decreasing lactic acid, decreasing muscle fibrosis, and decreasing the risk for injury. By using your body weight you will put pressure through your muscles in order to regulate areas of increased muscle tone or tightness.

How to Use a Foam Roller

It is important NOT to roll over bony areas (like your knee) or areas where you have an open wound or injury. Always roll in line with the muscles and at a SLOW PACE. When you roll over a tight area or muscle knot, slow down your speed and rest on top of this area for 20-30 seconds or until you feel the area release. If it is too painful to stay on top of this area, decrease the force by take some weight off of the area. When you are finished rolling, make sure that you drink plenty of water, just like you would after a massage. Use the foam roller as described at your own risk.



Gluteal Massage- Side lying, roll the gluteal region along the foam roller



Gluteal Massage Variation- To intensify the massage, bend and cross one leg over your opposite thigh shifting your weight into the gluteal region.



Hip Flexor Massage- Place the front portion of your right hip (where the hip creases) on the foam roller. Extend one leg and place your toes on the floor to help lift your left hip up off the foam roller. Repeat on the other side.



Hip Flexor Stretch- Place the foam roller under your hips. Pull one knee up to your chest and allow your right leg to relax and straighten.



IT Band Roll- Lay on the roller so that the roll sits under the side of the leg just below the hip joint. Support the weight of your body on your hands, and opposite leg (which is crossed out in front of the leg on the roller). This exercise helps loosen up your Ilio-Tibial Band (ITB) which runs down the outside of your left from your hip to your knee. Roll back slowly from below the hip, to just above the knee. NOTE: If your ITB is tight, this may be (extremely) uncomfortable to perform.



Quad Roll- Lay face down on your elbow with the roller under your quadriceps (the front of your upper leg) Roll from the bottom of your pelvis to above your knee. (Not over your knee)



Hamstrings- Position hamstrings on the foam roller and lean back slightly, using your arms for support. With hips and heels off the floor, use your arms for leverage and roll along the hamstrings from the bottom of your hip bone to the top of your knees.



Adductors- Place the foam roller on the inner than of one leg, keeping your hips open and right leg turned out slightly. Place your forearms of the floor for support and lift your hips off the floor.



Calf Roll- Support your weight with your hands on the floor and one calf on the roller. Use your upper body to support your weight and sit on the floor. Using your upper body roll from your heel to the top of your calf.



Peroneals-Place the side of your right lower leg on the foam roller and cross your left leg over in front for stability. Raise your hips off the floor and apply pressure to the side of your right leg.



Anterior Tibialis- Place both shins on the foam roller and allow your body weight to fall to both shins and hands. Roll from below your knees to your ankles.