

# Active Health Solutions

## Abdominal Bracing and Hollowing



### Finding the Neutral Spine

Lie on your back with your knees and hips bent and your feet resting comfortably on the floor. Slowly rock your pelvis backward as if you were pressing the small of your back against the floor. Now slowly rock your pelvis forward as if you were pressing your rear end against the floor while lifting your abdomen. Be sure to keep the movements slow and controlled. Explore the entire range of movement in which the pain is increased, decreased or eliminated. To identify the neutral spine position, repeat the previous movement by rocking your pelvis as if you were pressing your rear end against the floor while lifting your abdomen. Then back

away from this position to a point at which your spine is resting comfortably. This is the neutral spine position.

**Kegel-** To perform a kegel, squeeze bladder muscles as if you are trying to stop the flow of urine. Hold until fatigue. Kegeling should be done during each of the following exercises.

**Abdominal Bracing** is simply tensing (contracting) the abs as if you are about to be hit in the stomach. Bracing the abs will automatically pull in the stomach slightly, but abdominal bracing does not involve pulling or pushing out the abs. Abdominal bracing activates all the layers of abdominal muscles along with muscles deep in the lower back.



Abdominal Bracing can be performed lying or standing.

Place your hands around you waist.

Tense stomach as if you are about to be punched in it.

Increase the contraction so that you feel your sides stiffen.

Hold contraction for 10 seconds.

Repeat 5 times.

**Abdominal Hollowing** is drawing in the lower area of the stomach toward the spine. This activates the deep abs but requires very little activation of the superficial ab muscles.

Abdominal Hollowing – Targets the transversus abdominus.



Lie on back, knees bent, feet flat on floor.

Place your hands on the low abs.

Inhale slowly and deeply.

Slowly exhale, pulling your lower abs inward and upward toward your spine.

Repeat 5 times.