

Active Health Solutions

Foam Roller – Upper 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.



UPPER BACK

Upper Back Massage

Lie with foam roller under your upper back. Roll up and down do the foam roller from your shoulders to the bottom of your rib cage.



Upper Back Stretch

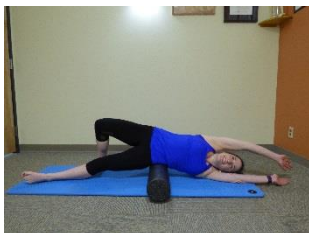
Start in the quadrupedal position with your hands placed on the foam roller. Round your back, tucking your chin into your chest and tailbone under. Raise your upper back until a stretch is felt in that region.



LATERAL LOWER BACK

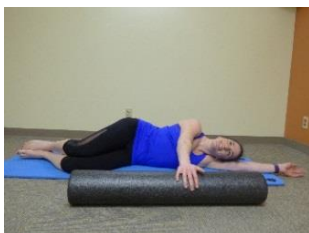
Obliques Massage

Place the foam roller between your ribs and hip. Slowly roll backwards until you feel a stretch in the lower back region. Hold on the tight spots until you feel the tissue soften. Repeat on the other side.



Obliques Massage Variation

To increase the intensity of the massage, raise your opposite arm overhead. Carefully ease into the massage to protect your lower back. If pain is felt radiating down your leg, stop the exercise immediately. Do not hold any one stretch for longer than 1 minute.



POSTERIOR & LATERAL SHOULDER

Scapular Stretch

Extend your right arm and place the palm of your left hand on the foam roller. Keeping your hips stacked and torso still, push the foam roller out and back, extending and retracting through the shoulder and shoulder blades.



Scapular Stretch Variation

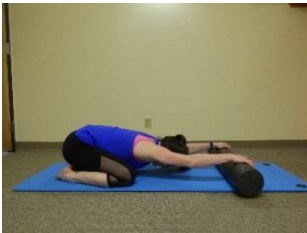
To increase the stretch reach your left arm out over the foam roller. Keeping the extension in your left arm, slowly circle your arm over, back and around while attempting to brush your finger tips along the floor as you circle. Repeat on the other side.



LATERAL CHEST

Latissimus/Teres Massage

Start lying on your left side with the foam roller below your armpit and positioned perpendicular to your body. Lean back slightly and extend your left arm out with your palm facing forward. Repeat on the other side.



Shoulder/Upper Back Stretch

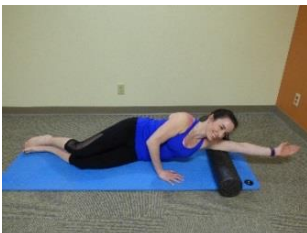
Outstretch your arms, placing your palms on the foam roller. Sit back on your heels with toes folded under. Focus on stretching forward, rather than down. Be careful not to hyperextend your shoulders by letting them drop down toward the floor.



LOWER BACK

Lateral Lower Back Massage

Position the foam roller horizontally along your lower back. Gently roll back and forth, stopping in tight areas to allow your spine to relax. Avoid this variation if you have lower back issues.



UPPER ARMS

Triceps and Upper Arm Massage

With the roller perpendicular to your body, extend your left arm and place the roller on the backside of your upper arm. For leverage, place your right arm out in front of your torso.



ANTERIOR CHEST

Anterior Chest/Pectoralis Stretch

Lie with your spine in line with the foam roller. Relax into the foam roller, allowing the front of your chest to stretch. Be careful not to arch your back.