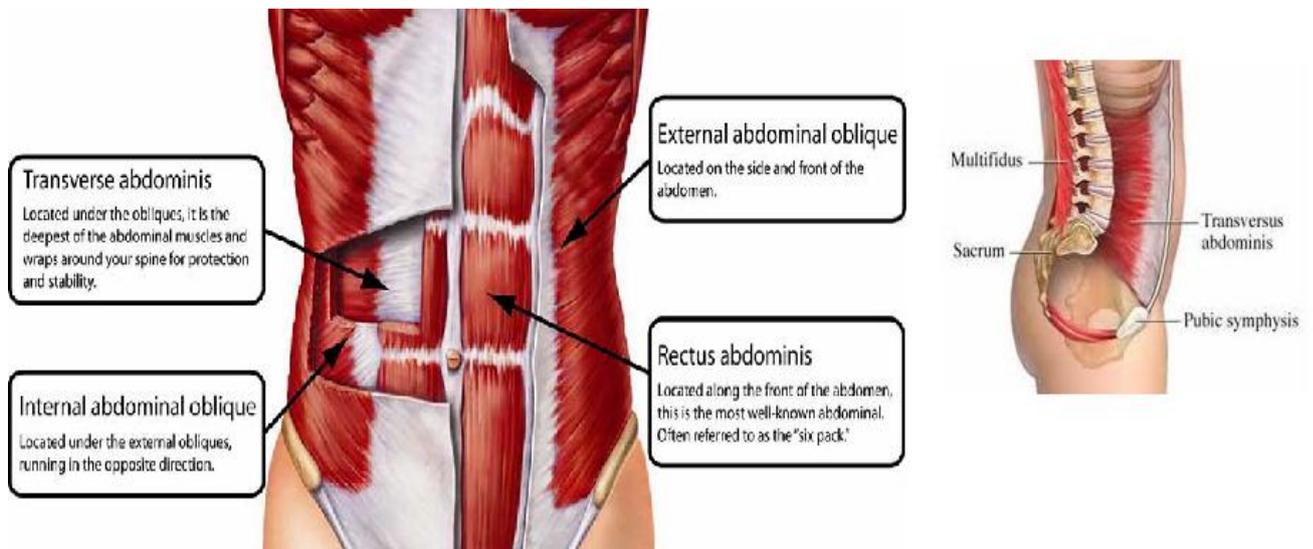


What is Core Strength?

Core strength is a topic physiotherapists harp on about endlessly, but what are we talking about exactly?



The Powerhouse of all movement!!!

Core stability is the ability to control all movement around ones trunk or midriff.

Good control in this area allows the muscles that power our limbs to work more effectively at their specific job of producing power. The core is supported by the back and abdominal muscles; these can be broken into the multifidus, rectus abdominus, obliques and the transverse abdominis. Each of these groups has a specific role but they work together to provide overall stability and control.

3 Daily Core Exercises for Cycling



There are many different core exercises for cycling; from *functional movements* to more controlled *Pilates*. We will focus on three basic, relatively static exercises that can be used to work the core effectively in your cycling training.

As a warning to those with lower back problems, it may be worth consulting a physiotherapist before starting these core exercises for cycling.

First things first.....**Finding your Neutral Spine:**



Headlights up

Headlights down

headlights straight

Headlights on your bum bones!!!

- Place your hands on top of your pelvis, just below your waist
- **headlights down** -Soften your knees and roll your pelvis forward and towards the floor
- **headlights up** -Now slowly roll your pelvis backward rolling your pelvis to the roof

- **head lights straight**-Find the place where your pelvis is half way between the two extremes --this is your Neutral!!!
- Pay attention to the “feel” of this position- **maintain this during all the exercises!!!**

Exercise 1: Dead Bug



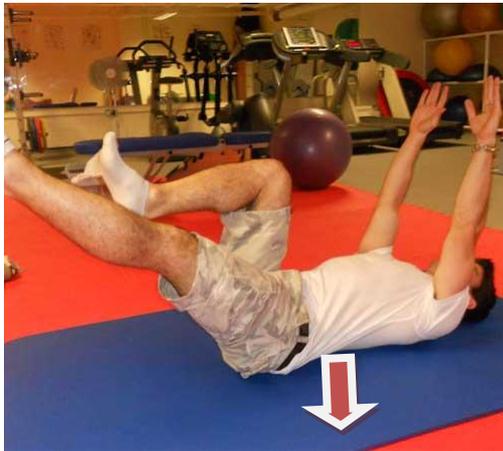
Dead Bug Starting Position

- Dead bug is relevant to cycling because it involves a similar cyclical action whilst having to stabilize the lower back.
- Keeping your lower back in a neutral position or pressed into a mat, go into the start position above.
- you can squeeze a ball between the hands



Dead Bug Mid-Phase

- From here extend one leg out to 45 degrees whilst keeping the other leg at 90 degrees.
- Extend your leg over 2-3 seconds in controlled fashion and focus on your lower back so that it doesn't arch upwards.
- Your breathing should remain controlled.



Dead Bug Finish

- Now alternate legs in a controlled manner ensuring your back stays firm and your breathing remains controlled.
- Attempt three sets of 45-60 seconds.



If you have any twinges or pain in your lower back stop the exercise and consult someone who will be able to give you appropriate coaching on the correct technique.

Exercise 2: Standard Plank



Plank

Planks are a great way to work on your static core strength, but they do require a relatively good level of fitness.

- The aim is to support your midriff between your elbows and feet.
- Make sure your lower back is in a neutral position (bum and lower back in a straight line) and your breathing stays controlled.
- Attempt 3 sets of 45-60 seconds with the equivalent rest between sets.



If you have any twinges or pain in your lower back stop the exercise and consult someone who will be able to give you appropriate coaching on the correct technique.

Exercises 3: Side Plank



Side Plank

- Side planks are great for the oblique muscles.
- The aim is to support your body weight between an elbow and feet, this time on your side.
- Ensure you keep a straight back from in front and at the side, and your breathing stays controlled.
- Attempt 3 sets of 45-60 seconds with the equivalent rest between sets.



If you have any twinges or pain in your lower back stop the exercise and consult someone who will be able to give you appropriate coaching on the correct technique