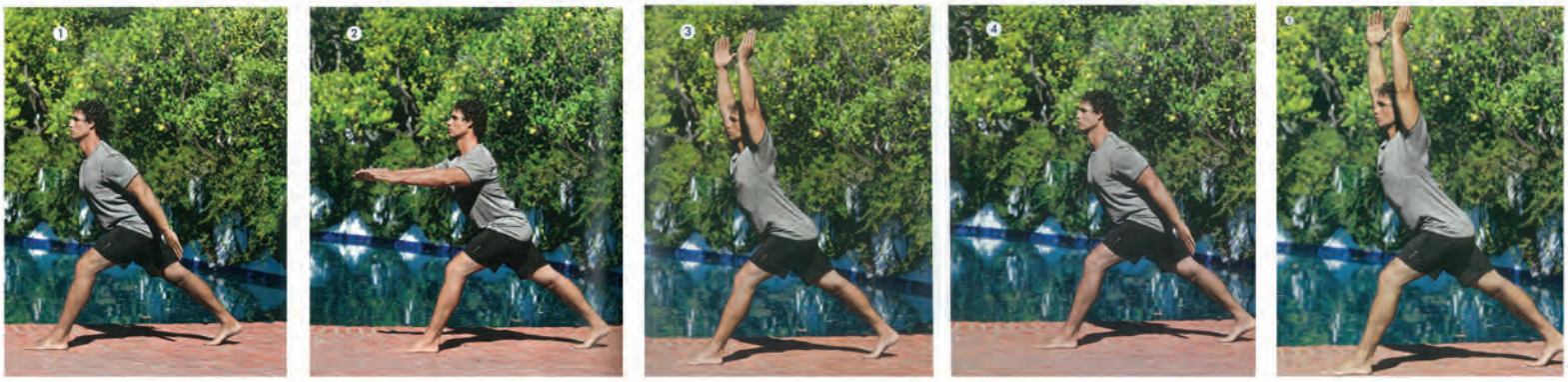
Sparta Chiropractic
and Wellness Center
Dr. Eric Loewrigkeit • Chiropractor
17 Woodport Road • Sparta, NJ • 07871

WOODPECKER

The Woodpecker is designed to introduce movement from the upper hamstrings, and it will prepare you to learn a new movement pattern. This exercise alleviates pressure from the knees and is one of the miracle moves when done the right way.



1. Step forward into a lunge with your front knee slightly bent and hips squared. Place your arms by your sides.

2. Keeping your back braced and your shoulders pulled back, begin to hinge forward from the hips, moving your arms straight in front of you. Pretend there is a string attached to your sternum and your upper body is being pulled forward, not down. You will feel a stretch at the upper hamstring and glute of the front leg.

3. Once you feel a good stretch, try to contract your glutes and upper hamstring by pressing your front heel into the ground. Slowly lift your arms in front of you as high as you can, and hold this position for 20 seconds.

4. Then extend your spine further and press your arms behind you, just like in the Founder.

5. Keeping the rest of your body in the same position, slowly raise your arms all the way up in front of you. Hold for 15 seconds.

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BACK EXTENSION

The repetitive contraction and relaxation of this back extension with a shoulder blade squeeze will begin to block pain receptors. This exercise is a strengthener that stabilizes the muscles at the base of your spine. When the back is acting up, we've found this exercise is the most effective of the group.

1. Lie flat on your stomach with your arms stretched out in front of you. Look at the floor a few inches in front of you; do not extend your neck to look straight ahead.

2. Bring your elbows and forearms off the floor, and pull your elbows hard into your rib cage/ midback, using your shoulder blades. You will contract your shoulder blades hard throughout the entire exercise, causing your chest to rise and your neck to lengthen.

3. Lift your upper body off the floor, leading with your chest. Keep your feet flat on the ground to avoid excess spinal compression.

4. Slowly lower your chest while keeping your elbows and hands off the ground.

Repeat 15 times.

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FOUNDATION PLANK

The Foundation variation on a conventional plank will get to a far deeper part of the abs and hips. This is done by changing the angles and weight distribution throughout the movement. We use the Foundation Plank to build pelvic stability and train the hips to move independently of the spine.

1. Press up to a rigid plank, a high pushup position. Keep your body in a straight line. Do not drop your hips. Your weight is on your toes.

2. Slowly walk your arms forward 6 inches. Press your heels down as far as you can. Drop your hips about 2 inches. Hold for 30 seconds.

3. Slowly walk your arms back directly under your shoulders.

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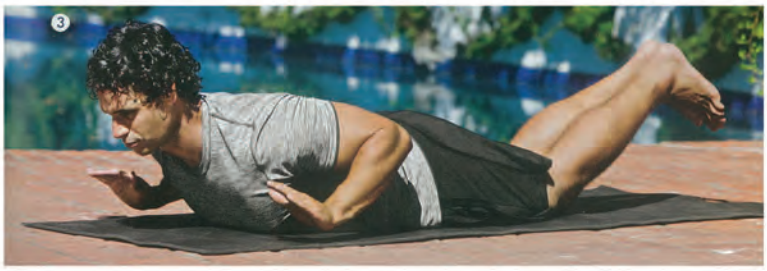
ADDUCTOR-ASSISTED BACK EXTENSION

This back extension with raised and squeezed legs works the adductor muscles inside your thighs. The adductors originate in the pelvis and attach to the knee. Contracting these muscles pulls the pelvis down and alleviates compression of the lower spine.



1. Lie flat on your stomach with your palms on the floor by your shoulders.

2. Pull your elbows back against your rib cage and your arms up off the ground. Bring your feet and knees together firmly.

3. Bend your knees to a 45-degree angle while pressing your knees and feet together as tightly as possible. Lower your feet until they are 6 inches off the ground. Lift your chest as high as you can while you continue to hold your feet 6 inches off the ground. Hold the pose for 10 to 20 seconds. The more you squeeze your knees together, the better this exercise is for you.

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CHILD'S POSE/KNEELING FOUNDER

This exercise will teach your body to go from flexion to extension. First you put your back into a flexion stretch, then you engage in an active contraction of the posterior chain muscles. When you raise your arms, you will isolate tension at your lower spine. You will be able to flex farther at the hip joints and isolate your lower-back muscles. If you feel any pain in your knees, refrain from doing this exercise.

1. Begin on your stomach with your palms on the floor by your ears.
2. Bend your knees and pull your hips all the way back to your heels.
3. Hold this position for 20 to 30 seconds.
4. Begin to lift your chest with your butt still resting on your heels.

5 Lift your butt off your heels, keeping your chest high and back extended. Reach back with your arms, shoulders pulling down toward your butt. Press your chest forward as far as you can. Hold for 10 to 15 seconds.

6 Slowly lift your arms all the way up in front of you while supporting yourself with your back and hips. Hold this position for 10 seconds.

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LUNGE STRETCH

1 Get into a long lunge with your right leg forward, knee slightly bent. Make sure your right knee is pressed behind your ankle, not over your toes. Keep your left foot facing forward and your back heel pressing toward the ground.

2 Extend your spine from the hips and raise your arms overhead. As you extend, you should feel a stretch at the hip flexors of the back leg.

3 Laterally flex your upper body to the right, away from your left (or back) leg, while keeping extension in your spine. Keep your hips squared. Hold the stretch for 20 seconds.

Repeat the stretch with your left leg bent forward and your right leg extended behind you. Flex your upper body to the left and hold for 20 seconds.