



# bodyworks

SPORTS PHYSIOTHERAPY

*working to keep you moving*

## **Muscle Release Techniques for**

### **Low Back Pain and Hip Pain**

The movement of the lower back is closely correlated to the upper back, pelvis and hips.

When the deep muscles of the hip are tight and contracted when at rest, the normal curvature of the spine can be changed and there can be an increase in load on the lower back. Hip muscles can become tight over time due to periods of prolonged sitting. As a result, low back pain can occur secondary to tight hip muscles.

Trigger point release and myofascial massage can be used as an aid to relax the hip muscles and lower back. This hip release program can be done at home using a ball and a foam roller. Stretching can be more effective after releasing the tight spots in the muscle. It should be noted that prolonged stretching should not be done prior to athletic activity.



## Foam Roller Exercises

Massage increases blood flow and reduces inflammation to tight muscles as well as stimulating hormones that promote relaxation. Rollers are used to mimic the pressure placed on soft tissue during a classic massage and can help increase mobility in layers of tissue.

### **Tips:**

- Finding your balance on a foam roller takes practice so don't get discouraged if the movements feel awkward at first.
- Initially, place the majority of your weight through your hands and feet until you feel more comfortable.
- Gently rock back and forth along the length of a muscle.

### **1. Back**

**Body position:** Rest your hands behind your head, have your feet on the ground with your knees up.

**Action:** Roll back and forth along your spine from your shoulder blades down to your hipbones.

**Note:** If you are having trouble balancing or are finding the motion too painful, shift your weight so only one side of your body is in contact with the foam roller and place your forearm on the ground.



## 2. Gluteus Maximus

**Body position:** Rest your forearms on the ground behind you, have your feet on the ground in front of you with your knees up.

**Action:** Roll back and forth from your hipbones down to the start of your hamstrings.

**Note:** If you are having trouble balancing or are finding the motion too painful, shift your weight so only one side of your body is in contact with the foam roller and place your forearm on the ground.



## 3. Hamstrings

**Body position:** Place your hands on the ground behind you, have your legs extended out in front of you. The leg with the roller under will be straight without touching the ground; the other leg will be bent with the foot placed on the ground.

**Action:** Roll back and forth along the back of your thigh from the base of the buttocks down to behind the knee. This exercise is performed one side at a time.

**Note:** Point your toes to the right or the left while rolling to make sure that you are targeting all three hamstring muscles.

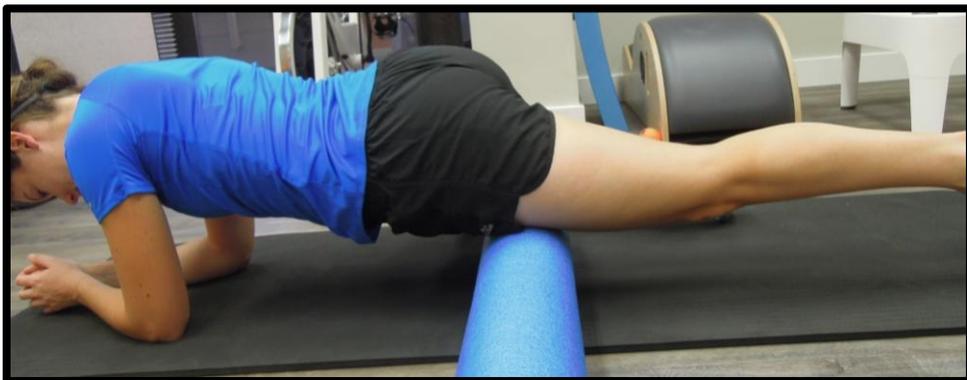
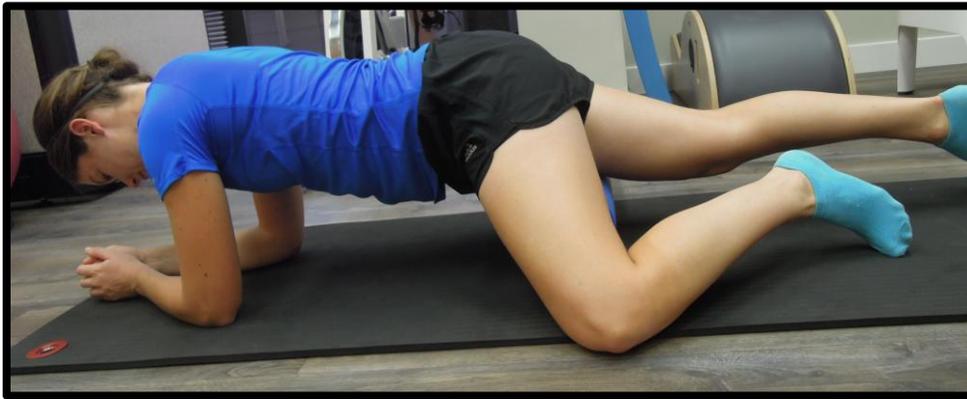


#### **4. Quadriceps**

**Body position:** Facing toward the ground (prone position), place your hands underneath your shoulders. The leg on the foam roller will be straight. The other leg will be bent so that both the knee and the foot are on the ground for support.

**Action:** Roll back and forth along the length of the muscle from the front of your hipbone down to your knee. Use your hands and the resting leg to rock your body.

**Note:** Rotate your leg so that all four of the muscles that make up the quads are targeted. You may find it easier to roll out the top half of the muscle first before rolling out the bottom half of the muscle.



#### **5. Adductors (groin)**

**Body Position:** In table-top position, press both forearms against the floor along with the knee of the resting leg.

**Action:** Roll back and forth along your inner thigh from your groin down to your knee

**Note:** If you are having trouble balancing or are finding the motion too painful, shift your bodyweight into your hands and away from the side being foam-rolled.

(see next page for a picture of the exercise)





## **6. IT Band/TFL**

**Body Position:** Lie on one side. Keep the leg being foam rolled straight; cross the other leg over and bend it so that the foot rests flat on the ground. Place both of your hands on the ground for support.

**Action:** Roll back and forth along the outside of the thigh from the hip down to the knee.

**Note:** If you are having trouble balancing or are finding the motion too painful, shift your bodyweight into your hands.

