



THE LIFT PROGRAM

As an introduction to the training program and exercises offered in the “Lift Program”, please enjoy this sample.

The “Lift Program” is a specialized movement system for supporting a fit pelvic floor. Lift-Pro is a functional movement system designed to enhance pelvic floor function and overall posture.

Lift-Pro is designed to optimize natural movement, tension/release patterns in order to re-engage and/or release the pelvic floor musculature as part of the whole body. Isolating muscles (i.e. Kegels) is only a small part of a functional, organic, integrated body system. The program uses awareness techniques, natural, therapeutic, and Pilates based exercises.

SUPINE (on the back)

We begin all of the formal practice on the back (supine) as a safe starting point for those with existing pelvic floor disorders.

Notice the weight of your tail. Notice the connection to both feet. Notice if there is a large or small gap between your back and the floor. Notice if the shoulders are relaxed. Notice if the neck and chin are relaxed or if the head is tilted back.

- **Heel glide**
 - Breathe in through the nose and with the feet sitting bone width apart glide the right heel along the mat thinking of a sitting bone to heel connection.
 - Exhale making a ‘FFFFFF’ sound gliding the heel back the sitting bone thinking of a heel to sitting bone connection.
 - Alternate working the right leg and then the left.

This exercise encourages a relationship of proximal/distal movement patterning from the feet to the pelvis. It subtly activates the deep abdominals and pelvic floor when the pelvis is in its optimal position. It also uses hip extension and flexion, knee flexion and extension, and ankle dorsiflexion.

Be mindful to not arch the low or middle back during the heel glide away. It is important to maintain pelvic support and control without gripping during both the glide away and the glide return.

- **Heel glide with leg rotation (both ways)**
 - Breathe in through the nose and with the feet sitting bone width apart glide the right heel along the mat thinking of a sitting bone to heel connection.



- Exhale making a 'FFFFFF' sound turning the right knee out to the side and back to the start position.
- Alternate working the right leg and then the left.
- Breathe in through the nose and begin to turn the right knee out to the side and glide the leg forward ending with the leg straight and knee to the sky. Draw the heel to sitting bone returning to the start position (as in the first exercise).
- Alternate working the right leg and then the left.

This exercise likewise encourages the relationships listed in the 'Heel Glide' and begins to introduce more involvement of the hip rotators and obliques.

Be mindful to not arch the low or middle back. Be mindful to maintain pelvic symmetry when the knee turns away from the body, specifically controlling the opposite side from the leg that is moving.

- **Bridge with Wide Pilates V feet**
 - Breathe in through the nose while pressing on both feet (not heels only) and the backs of the shoulders to lift the hips off the ground. Be sure to put the energy of the lift slightly forward toward the shins.
 - Exhale making a 'FFFFFF' sound returning the hips to the mat, relaxing the spine vertebra. By vertebra.

This exercise is a whole body exercise. It promotes grounding, strength, and articulation. The triceps and posterior shoulder muscles activate and the chest and anterior shoulder muscles open. The neck, upper back, middle back, and low back open, relax, and correct. Hamstrings and glutes are activated and the front of the hips and thighs are lengthened and opened.

Be mindful to not lift the hips from squeezing the upper glutes and low back. Be mindful maintain the correct neck alignment. Be mindful to keep the shoulders back and the feet full pressing on the ground with ease in the back of the knee.

SIDE LYING

We move to side lying to begin to challenge the body and further develop awareness, balance, and symmetry of movement and muscle balance and release.

Lying on your side in a fetal position. Ensure that your head, bottom and top shoulder, and hips are in alignment, as if they are pressed evenly against a wall. Head can be resting on the bottom arm or a pillow to better align the neck.

Ensure that both feet are relaxed one on top of the other and that knees are relatively even.

- **Double knee lift** (creates small rotation)



- Breathe in through the nose simultaneously lifting both knees toward the sky. This will cause a natural small twist at the waist. Try to keep both knees connected.
- Exhale making a 'FFFFF' sound returning the knees to the ground.

This exercise is a quick and direct means of simultaneously activating the internal rotators (adductors) of one leg and the external rotators (abductors) of the other leg. It also activates the obliques, deep abdominals and a natural lift of the pelvic floor.

Be mindful to keep the legs together through the movement.

PRONE (on the stomach)

The prone position begins to challenge and activate the back lines against gravity while encouraging the front lines to both work and stretch.

Lying on your stomach with the hands resting under the forehead. Notice if the shoulders are relaxed. Notice if the hips evenly touch the ground or if more weight is on one or the other. Notice if the legs can hold together or if they must open to relax the low back. Notice if the ribs are tense or relaxed.

● **Laser beam chest lift**

- Breathe in through the nose imagining a laser beam on the front/middle of the chest lifting and beaming toward the wall in front of you. The head naturally rises with the chest. Try not to pinch the back of the neck. Try not to tense the tops of the shoulders.
- Exhale through the nose noticing your position.
- Inhale in position and then exhale back down to the mat.

This exercise introduces work of the back lines against gravity where the posture tends to be very weak. The posterior neck, shoulder, upper, and mid back muscles are encouraged to activate against a gentle stretch of the chest wall and abdomen.

Be mindful to not over grip the glutes, neck, low back, and ankles.

● **Laser beam chest lift with nose circles**

- Breathe in through the nose imagining a laser beam on the front/middle of the chest lifting and beaming toward the wall in front of you. The head naturally rises with the chest. Try not to pinch the back of the neck. Try not to tense the tops of the shoulders.
- Exhale through the nose noticing your position.
- Inhale while maintaining the lift and begin to circles the nose right to left.
- Exhale when you return to center.
- Alternate working right to left and then left to right.
- Inhale in place
- Exhale return to the mat.



As in 'Laser Beam Chest Lift', this exercise activates the back lines against the stretch of the front. The nose circles offer an opportunity for the commonly tight neck, upper and mid back muscles to gently stretch for postural improvement. Obliques are also activated more with this exercise.

Be mindful to not grip the glutes, low back, ankles or neck. Be mindful to maintain the postural control during the nose circles, as the body may be inclined to twist and tilt.

- **Pelvic rock**

- While resting the head on the hands, inhale and exhale through the nose naturally.
- Begin to rock the pelvic bones back and forth. As they rock back be sure to imagine opening the sitting bones. As they rock forward try not to grip the upper glutes and lower back, or grip the front of the hips and pelvis. The rocks should feel like an opening back and a releasing or relaxation to the forward position. Imagine the bones rocking back and forth without muscle gripping patterns.

This exercise introduces functional movement of the pelvis to normalize the pelvic position. Movement is to happen from the bones. The symphysis pubis of the front, against the sacrum from the back.

Be mindful to move from the bones only. This means that the back relaxes when the pelvis rocks the tail out and up and the glutes and hips relax when the pelvis rocks the tail under.

QUADRUPED (hands and knees)

The quadruped position builds strength, balance, alignment, and control. It challenges the body in space and fosters postural corrections.

Ensure that your hands and shoulders are aligned and that the knees and hips are aligned. Notice if you can hold your spine in a straight position and not rounded in the hips or back. Notice if your feet grip or if your hips grip. Notice if your head hangs or holds its position. Notice if you collapse at your shoulder blades. Notice if you can straighten your elbows.

- **Wag tail**

- With the sitting bones feeling wide, inhale and exhale naturally through the nose.
- Lift the navel only as if you are lifting a chain. Do not move the hips or back to lift the navel.



- Wag the tail side to side. Notice if the movement is more free in one direction or the other. Ensure that the hips do not tuck under in the movement and that the back doesn't sag and the waist or shoulders.

This exercise introduces lateral movement of the pelvis and offers a stretch to the quadratus lumborum, lateral portions of the obliques, and posterior/lateral hip muscles. It simultaneously activates the deep abdominals and pelvic floor in a functional lift. The quadruped position also automatically activates the arm muscles and shoulder girdle, along with the posterior neck stabilizers, and spinal muscles.

Be mindful to not sag the shoulders, neck, or upper/mid back. Be mindful to not sag the lower back. Be mindful to not round the upper or lower back during the exercise.

- **Pelvic circles**

- With the same prep position as the above exercise this exercise challenges a fuller range of motion of the pelvis.
- Imagine the points of a compass: North, South, East, West and imagine them outlined by a circle. Inhaling and exhaling naturally begin to circle the pelvis right to left and then repeat left to right.

This exercise furthers the actions of the "Wag Tail" exercise by asking for a circular movement of the pelvis. This challenges the functional movement system in a right to left and left to right movement pattern. The body will recognize that one side is more natural in the movement than the other. The entire pelvic musculature is activated along with all of the muscles from the 'Wag Tail'.

Be mindful to not sag at the shoulders, neck, or upper/mid back. Be mindful to not sag the lower back. Be mindful to not round the upper or lower back during the exercise.