

Preventing Women's Heart Disease Through Education



CAROL For Heart

Exercise #1: THE TRANSVERSE ABDOMINUS

Huh? The trans-what?

This body part may sound unfamiliar by name, but one short description of what it does will have you nodding your head in recognition.

Have you ever “sucked in” your tummy to fit into a pair of jeans? Have you ever done so at your high school reunion when an old flame approaches? Ha! See? You know what I’m talking about.

This deep abdominal muscle runs horizontally and wraps all the way around your lower torso like a piece of plastic wrap. By “sucking in” your tummy, i.e., bringing your bellybutton in towards your spine, you are activating this muscle and tightening its grip around the lumbar spine (lower back), giving your back a bit of protection and support. Along with proper posture (covered in exercise #2), activating this muscle during everyday activities can play a role in reducing the risk of back injury.

The exercise:

To practice using the transverse abdominus, try bringing your bellybutton in toward your spine and holding it in for 30 seconds. You may have to start with 10 seconds and work up to 30. Do not forget to breathe during this exercise! It is not the same as holding your breath. You can practice this exercise anytime & anywhere (while driving, working at a desk, watching t.v., etc).

Alaina M. Eichinger • Certified Personal Trainer • Lansdale, PA • In-home training also available
Training sessions available at the Horsham Athletic Club, Horsham, PA • 215-675-4535

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