



Foam Roller Exercises

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Using a foam roller can be an effective way of releasing tight and/or stiff muscles. A regular mobilisation, stretching or training programme should be designed to incorporate the use of a foam roller. 2-4 sessions a week, with 1-2 minutes per muscle group should be adequate, however severely tight muscles may require a bit longer or more sessions. Foam rolling can be uncomfortable but should not be painful, it should be tolerable, and it gets easier over time with regular use.

Rolling should be either the full length of the muscle group, or if a certain area of the muscle is tight/ tender, mini-rolls or side to side rocking may be effective on this area.

Calves

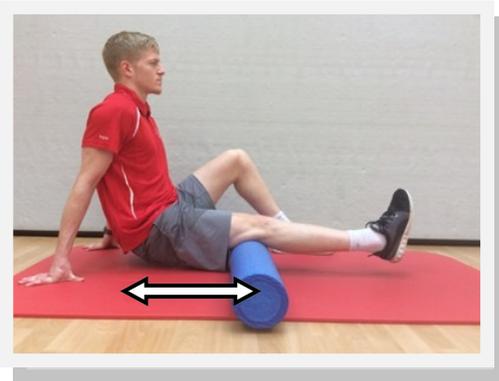


- Place one leg onto the foam roller, starting at your ankle.
- With the other foot and both hands on the floor supporting your weight, place as much weight through the rolling leg as bearable.
- Roll up the full length of the calf towards the knee then roll back down to ankle.
- Crossing the supporting leg over the rolling leg will increase load, hitting deeper within the muscle.
- Turning the foot inwards or outwards will also target different parts of the calf.



Hamstrings

A) Single Leg Rolls



B) Crossover Leg Rolls



- Place one leg onto the foam roller (Picture A), starting on the back of your thigh just above the knee joint.
- Hands and opposite leg supporting, place as much weight as bearable through the rolling leg.
- Roll up the leg to the glute and back down to behind the knee.
- Cross supporting leg over to increase load and intensity (Picture B).
- Foot inwards or outwards will target different parts of the Hamstring.

Glutes

- Sit on the foam roller, hands behind you for support.
- Cross one ankle over the opposite knee, with a slight lean towards the crossed side.
- Roll up and down the glute, rolls are smaller but still roll the full range of the muscle.
- You may have to play with the posture to get the release you want, lean forward or back.



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Quadriceps

A) Single Leg



B) Both Legs



- Lie onto the foam roller in a press up position, place one leg (Picture A) or both legs (Picture B) onto the roller just below the hip/waist line.
- Bend the other knee so the supporting foot is in contact with the floor but set away from the foam roller.
- Place hands in front so you can use your arms to help pull, whilst your leg(s) push.
- Roll the foam roller from hip to above the knee, working the full length of your thigh.
- Turning the foot inwards or outwards will target different areas of the muscle.

Illiotalband (ITB)



- Start in the Quadriceps position then turn onto the outside of the hip being rolled.
- Pull with the hands and push with the supporting leg to roll the foam roller from the hip to just above the knee.
- Turning the foot inwards or outwards to target different areas of the ITB.

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Shin (Anterior Tibialis)



- Start in a 4 point kneeling position, hands underneath shoulders and knees below hips.
- Place the lower leg onto the foam roller just below the knee.
- Maintaining spinal posture, take the knees towards your chest allowing the roller to move along the full length of the shin bone.

Chest Stretch (Spine Mobiliser)



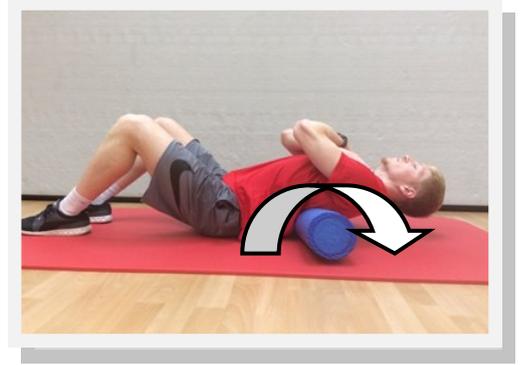
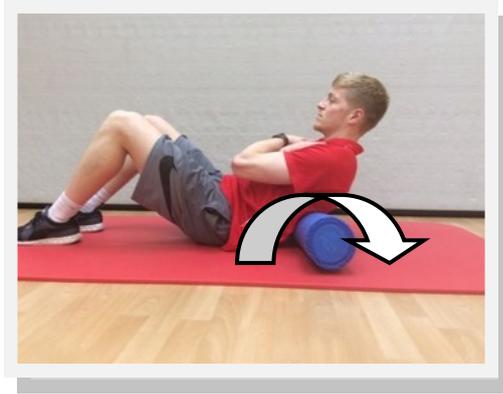
- Start by lying on the foam roller length ways, along the spine.
- Bend the knees to reduce any lower back arch.
- Take the arms into the crucifix position, feel the stretch through the chest and possibly into the front of the shoulders.
- If desired take the arms slightly higher above the head into a 'Y' position, keeping hands on the ground.
- Keep breathing relaxed and steady.
- Hold for 30 seconds to 2 minutes.

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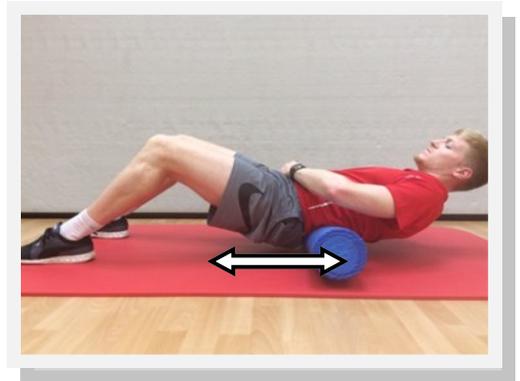
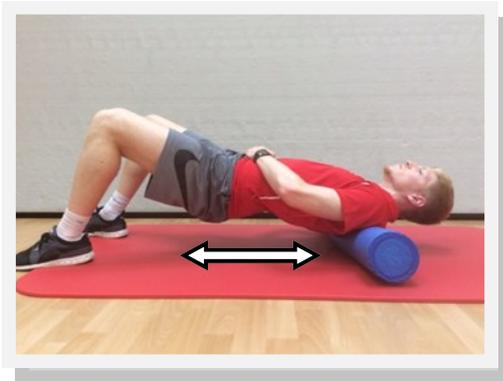


Mid-Back Mobiliser



- An effective exercise for anywhere from between the shoulder blades to the lower back.
- Start by sitting down in front of the foam roller, then sit back to cause contact between your back and the foam roller, maintain a neutral posture in the spine.
- Keeping your bottom on the floor, lower the shoulders towards the ground, try not to arch your lower back upwards.
- Work your way up and down the spine to see where you are stiff.
- Due to being a mobiliser do not hold for a prolonged period.

Thoracic and Lumbar Extensions



- Go straight from the last exercise, or from starting position of the Mid-back mobiliser.
- Lift bottom off the ground to be in line with the shoulders
- Roll up and down the spine by bending and straightening the knees.
- Try maintaining the spinal posture, keeping parallel with the floor.
- Lean a little towards either side to target that side.
- Hold for 30 seconds to 2 minutes.

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