

PREHAB CIRCUIT 1

GROIN PAIN 2: PREVENTION

PHIL NEWTON, Clinical Director of the Lilleshall Sports Injury Rehab Centre, continues his examination of hip and groin pain by presenting practical exercises designed to combat it in a Prehab Circuit. (Part 1 was published in SP Issue 2006/3.)

REDUCING THE CHANCE OF GROIN AND HIP PAIN

How about a training strategy that can reduce the chance of succumbing to a common squash injury and can improve your movement around the court at the same time? Hip and groin pain is a common complaint amongst squash players and can arise from quite small reductions in hip flexibility. This is often linked to reduced muscular strength and control.

So here's the deal – add some simple hip stretching exercises and some basic strengthening and conditioning work to your training and you can limit the chance of getting groin and hip pain and at the same time improve your movement around the court.

PREVENTIVE PREHAB

The use of specifically targeted conditioning work to prevent injury and to enhance performance has gained popularity across a number of sports over recent years. This approach is sometimes termed 'Preventative Rehab' or 'Prehab'. The following circuit of exercises is an example of one such Prehab programme that we use at Lilleshall when dealing with groin and pelvic problems in a wide range of professional athletes. Two of the exercises are primarily mobilising or stretching exercises. Others will improve strength and control and some will do both. When performing the circuit, the emphasis should be on good technique. The intention is not to improve absolute strength, so heavy resistance is unnecessary. These exercises should be performed slowly, with low repetitions and high set numbers. This will help emphasise good quality movement. This is also aided by the correct sequencing of the exercises, which helps to avoid excessive fatigue thereby promoting good exercise technique.

TARGET RESTRICTED RANGE OF MOTION

This example of a Prehab circuit targets the ranges of motion that are frequently restricted in those who develop chronic sport-related groin pain. It also targets some of the key muscle groups that are frequently de-conditioned.

None of the exercises should cause pain. This circuit would typically take around 30 minutes to complete and should be done two or three times per week. A Prehab Circuit such as this can be a stand-alone session or part of an extended warm-up prior to a training session.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Prehab programmes are most successful when they are tailored to the needs of a specific individual. If you have a history of hip and groin problems, you should see a physiotherapist who can identify specific issues of weakness and inflexibility that can then be sorted out with a personalised Prehab programme.

GROIN PAIN PREHAB EXERCISES

The following exercises should be performed in sequence circuit style.

1. Squats – 6 reps
2. Hip flexion/adduction – 10 second hold x6
3. Hip abduction – 6 reps
4. Hip internal rotation – 10 second hold x6
5. Split squats – 6 reps
6. Hip extension – 6 reps
7. Hip adduction – 6 reps

REPEAT ABOVE X5

**CIRCUIT:
30 MINUTES**

**FREQUENCY:
2-3 TIMES PER WEEK**

**THE EXERCISES:
SEE OVER**



PREHAB CIRCUIT 1

1. SQUAT 6 reps



Stand with the heels shoulder width apart and with the toes turned out slightly. Placing the heels on small discs enables a deeper range of squatting to be achieved with good trunk alignment. The heels must not lift as the squat is performed. The back must be kept straight at all times. At the bottom of the squat, the backside should not be lower than the knees and the trunk should be parallel with the shins. Only use a weight bar if body weight alone can be well controlled.

2. HIP FLEXION / ADDUCTION Hold for 10 seconds - 6 reps



Pull the knee across the mid-line of the body towards the opposite shoulder. As this is done the opposite knee should be kept flat to the floor. The knee is pulled to the point of maximum hip stretch and held for 10 seconds. The stretch is then released for a couple of seconds.

3. HIP ABDUCTION 6 reps



1. Lie against a wall. Bend the bottom leg so that the trunk is stable.



2. Keep the heel in contact with the wall as the leg is lifted. This will keep the leg in line with the trunk and ensure that the correct muscles are exercised.

4. HIP INTERNAL ROTATION Hold for 10 seconds - 6 reps

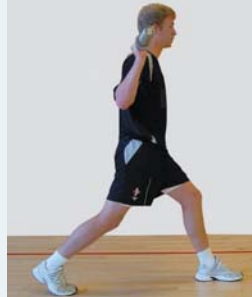


1. Sit with the back against a wall.



2. Push both knees inwards with the hands, so that the knees come together. This will apply a rotational stretch to the hips.

5. SPLIT SQUAT 6 Reps



1. Stand with both feet in line with the shoulders. Do not stand with the feet in a straight line – 'tightrope' fashion. The use of a weight bar is only appropriate if basic body weight control has been established.



2. Slowly drop the body so that the rear knee bends to 90 degrees. The trunk should remain vertical above the rear bent knee. The front knee should not be pushed beyond the toes and the heel of the leading foot should remain in contact with the floor throughout.

6. HIP EXTENSION 6 Reps



1. Keep the low back straight and keep the front of the hips flat against the end of the bed, bench or table.



2. The knee must be kept bent as the hip is extended. This reduces the amount of work that the hamstrings do and focuses the effort onto the buttock muscles.

7. HIP ADDUCTION 6 Reps



1. Position the heels and back of the legs against a wall. Keep the lower back flat to the floor.



2. Slide the legs apart, keeping the heels against the wall. From the position of maximum leg opening, slide the legs back to the starting position. Keep the knees straight and the heels in contact with the wall at all times.