



# 3 Counties News

Chiropractic Newsletter

Feb 2013

## Why Core stability is important for everyone!

Typically, when the word "core" is used, it is in reference to the six-pack abdominals and lower back. However, it actually includes a large number of muscles between the abdomen and the ribs plus deep muscles which support the spinal column. These all need to be kept strong and healthy in order to hold your body stable.

Posture and Support are the main roles of the core muscles. They are responsible for holding the upper body in the proper posture for whatever it is you're doing, be that standing, lifting something, riding a bike or sitting at your desk. Posture, as in pulling your shoulders back and sitting or standing up tall is the easiest to see.

Support is another major role of these muscles. Think of picking up a bag of shopping, doing squats, or putting something on the top shelf in the kitchen. Your core muscles contract to hold the body rigid and support the spine. If you don't or can't contract the core muscles to support your upper body, you will either falter under the weight of whatever you are lifting or put additional pressure on the spine.

The core muscles are also responsible for efficient movement. Without effective core muscles, the upper body would flop about unnecessarily creating a lot more work for other muscles and joints in the body. When sitting at a desk all day our core muscles become lazy and weak – we human beings are not designed for sitting!

The key role of the core is to support the upper body, primarily to prevent injury to the spinal column. The spine is an amazing design with each joint allowing about four degrees of movement. If the muscles are not strong enough, the body may well push the boundaries of this limited range. If the limits are exceeded too much and/or too often, it can cause damage to the ligaments, facet joints or disc between the vertebra – this will lead to back pain.

Because the rectus abdominis is the most visible muscle it gets all the attention. However, strengthening just this muscle by doing nothing but sit-ups and forgetting the rest is dangerous. It only strengthens the front of the abdomen so there is little support on the sides and at the back. This doesn't mean you should never do these exercises, but activities that include all the core muscles working together are important.

Get into the habit of tightening up all the muscles around your abdomen and stomach 10 times a day. Create cues, like the phone ringing or every time you have a drink of water to contract the muscles. Pull your stomach in tight for as long and often as you can!

Other exercises to improve your core strength include Pilates, swimming and specific exercises such as the plank or bridge. Here are some useful websites offering core programs you can try at home:

[Quick core program](#)

[Core stability video with Gym ball](#)

[In depth core exercises slide show](#)

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## FREE SPINAL CHECKS!



Do you know somebody who is suffering from aches and pains but doesn't know where to go for treatment? We offer a **FREE** 10-minute spinal check for anyone who would like to find out whether Chiropractic care could help them. This includes a chat with the Chiropractor and examination of the area of complaint – all with no obligation.

If we don't think we can help we will advise where would be best to go for further investigation. But don't forget - virtually all muscle or joint problems can be eased to some extent by Chiropractic treatment and we are fantastic at fixing back pain, neck pain, headaches, sports injuries and sciatica! We can give advice on posture and spinal strengthening too.

For more information about looking after your spine follow us on [Twitter](#) or Like our Facebook page [here](#) – if you have anything you would like us to tweet about let us know!



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